

Private Polly

My life in the
army page 15



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THE INDEPENDENT

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WEDNESDAY 10 JULY 1996

WEATHER Warm and dry with sunny spells

40P (IR 45P)

Exclusive: Robert Fisk tracks Saudi Arabia's most wanted man to his lair in Afghanistan

Arab rebel leader warns the British: 'Get out of the Gulf'

Osama Bin Laden, the fiercest opponent of the Saudi regime and of America's presence in the Gulf, has warned Britain that it must withdraw its servicemen from Saudi Arabia if it wishes to avoid the fate of the 19 Americans killed by a truck bomb in the Kingdom last month. In an interview with the *Independent* in a remote mountainous area of Afghanistan's Nangarhar province – to which he has returned from Sudan with hundreds of his Arab mujaheddin guerrillas – the 40-year Saudi dissident declared that killing the Americans marked "the beginning of war between Muslims and the United States".

Although taking no personal responsibility for the bombings, which have sent tremors through the vulnerable, oil-rich states of the Arabian peninsula, Mr Bin Laden insisted that the killing of the Americans in Khorbar (Dhahran) just over two weeks ago demonstrated the depth of hatred for Americans in Saudi Arabia. "Not long ago, I gave advice to the Americans to withdraw their troops from Saudi Arabia," he said. "Now let us give some advice to the governments of Britain and France to take their troops out – because what happened in Riyadh and Khorbar showed that the people who did this have a deep understanding in choosing their targets. They hit their main enemy, which is the Americans. They killed no secondary enemies, nor their brothers in the army or the police of Saudi Arabia ... I give this advice to the government of Britain."

Bin Laden, most of whose immensely wealthy family have remained loyal to King Fahd, has been accused by Western and Arab governments of being "the financier of an Islamic international", training fighters to oppose the governments of Algeria and Egypt as well as Saudi Arabia. And in his long and sombre interview, he expressed his contempt for the Saudi monarchy and its failure to abide by Islamic sharia law, adding that the "evils" of the Middle East stemmed from America's attempt to take over the



Hunted: Osama Bin-Laden, pictured last week. The Saudi bombing was 'the beginning of war between Muslims and the United States', he said

Photograph: Robert Fisk

region and from its support for Israel. My journey to him took me across miles of devastated villages and fields in the rocky mountainsides of the country where he once fought Soviet invaders, and it culminated in a remote village where dozens of his Arab mujaheddin, dressed in Afghan clothes, stood guard as he spoke.

In Saudi robes – and sitting next to his two teenage sons, Omar and Saad – Bin Laden revealed that he had arrived here from Sudan on May 18th, along with his fighters, after the Saudis and Americans had put pressure on the Khartoum military government to expel him. He claimed that he would carry on a campaign

from Afghanistan to set up a "true" Islamic state under sharia law in Saudi Arabia which, he said, had been turned into "an American colony". When I asked him if he was declaring war on the West, he replied: "It is not a declaration of war – it's a real description of the situation. This doesn't mean declaring war against

the West and Western people – but against the American regime which is against every Muslim."

As he spoke, armed Egyptians, Saudis, Algerians and Afghans patrolled the night-time fields around us, their presence revealed by a single hissing gas lamp. At one point Mr Bin Laden broke off our con-

versation to pray, alongside his Arabs, on straw matting laid out in the field. Every few minutes, gunfire could be heard from the mountains to the east. "The explosion in Khorbar," he said, "did not come as a direct reaction to the American occupation but as a result of American behaviour against Muslims, its

support of Jews in Palestine [sic] and the massacre of Muslims in Palestine and Lebanon – of Sabra and Chatila and Qana – and of the Sharif el-Sheikh [anti-terrorist] conference."

Mr Bin Laden's arrival back in Afghanistan after five and a half years in Sudan marks a new stage in the campaign of the Organisation of Advice and Reform.

He accused the Saudi royal family of promising sharia laws while allowing the United States "to westernise Saudi Arabia and drain the economy". He blamed the Saudi regime for spending \$25bn in support of Saddam Hussein in the Iraq-Iraq war and a further \$60bn in support of the Western armies in the war against Iraq in 1991, "buying military equipment which is not needed or useful for the country, buying airplanes by credit" – while at the same time creating unemployment, high taxes and a bankrupt economy.

"The safest place in the world for me is Afghanistan," he said.

When I suggested to Mr Bin Laden that Afghanistan was the only place – rather than the safest – in which he could campaign against the Saudi government, he and some of the Arab fighters around him burst into laughter. "There are other places," he replied.

Did he mean Tajikistan, I asked? Or Uzbekistan? Or Kazakhstan? "There are several places where we have friends and close brothers – we can find refuge and safety in them." When I said that he was already a hunted man, he dismissed my comment with contempt. "Danger is a part of our life – do you not realise that we spent 10 years fighting against the Russians and the KGB?"

... When we were fighting the Russians here in Afghanistan, 10,000 Saudis came here to fight over a period of 10 years."

Osama Bin Laden clearly believes he now represents the most formidable enemy of the Saudi regime and of the American presence in the Gulf. Both are probably right to regard him as such.

Comment, page 14

'There will be bonfires across Ulster'

COLIN BROWN and
MICHAEL STREETER



Troop reinforcements were ordered to Northern Ireland as Unionist leaders warned the Prime Minister that Ulster was a "powder keg" which could erupt tomorrow into the worst violence witnessed in the Province since the Troubles began, 25 years ago.

A third battalion of around 600 troops was preparing to leave Britain as the stand-off between the security forces and Orangemen at Drumcree threatened to escalate into widespread violence. "There will be bonfires across Ulster," said one Unionist leader.

The little churchyard at Drumcree, where Orangemen

and police were facing each other across a barricade of concrete and barbed wire, could mark a disaster, with the potential for reducing the peace process to ruins, and putting at risk the survival of John Major's Government in the Commons.

As the tension heightened, Mr Major gave his total backing to the decision by Sir Hugh Annesley, the Chief Constable of the RUC, to halt the Orangemen's march at Drumcree, in Portadown, which has led to three days of confrontation and violence across Ulster.

Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionists, David Trimble, leader of the Ulster Unionists, and Robert McCartney, the Independent Unionist MP, held an emergency meeting with the Prime Minister in his room at the Commons, to press for a climb-down by the security forces.

They warned Mr Major there could be up to 80,000 Orangemen at Portadown on Friday. "It is a powder keg which could only be resolved when a decision is taken by the Prime Minister," said Mr Paisley. "There will be civil commotion. This is serious and it is getting more serious."

But Mr Major insisted on backing the operational decisions of the RUC. In the Commons, Mr Major condemned the violence as "indefensible" and warned that it could set back the search for peace, but the cross-party talks have become a side-issue in the con-

frontation leading up to the marching day of 12 July, to mark the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne.

The violence in the early hours of yesterday morning, which is likely to cost the Province's economy and tourist industry millions of pounds, saw some of Belfast's worst loyalist violence for many years.

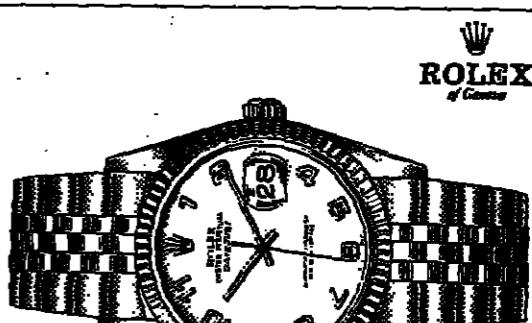
Two Catholic schools were damaged in fires and four Catholic families were forced to leave their homes in the Old Park area after intimidation by gangs of loyalists. One of the Catholic residents left at Lorrain Drive, Maria Darragh, said she would now have to leave the area as well. She said: "In the end, the fact is that I am a Catholic living in a Protestant

area. We are just going to have to go."

The intimidation and burning of homes was attacked as "ethnic cleansing" by Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, in the House of Commons.

Some MPs believe Unionist leaders are partly responsible for fanning the flames. Mr Trimble has appeared on the Orangemen's front line, although he has been appealing for restraint.

Confrontation with the Unionist MPs on whom Mr Major may have to depend increased the threat of defeat in the Commons. His one-seat majority could be put to the test before the end of the month.



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Why flash boys shine at A-level

Concern about the different performance of the sexes in exams has been growing. A report to be published today by the Office for Standards in Education will suggest strategies to help schools eliminate the gender divide.

Researchers from London and Leicester universities investigated why boys outperform girls in the top grades at A-level even though girls are ahead at GCSE. They concluded that the explanation may lie partly in the style of the exams. While GCSE appears to reward hard work and good organisation, A-level seems to require flair and confidence.

And at A-level they suggest, boys' faith in their ability may override their lack of knowledge and skill.

They had at GCSE in A grades but lose their lead in B grades. In physics GCSE, girls are ahead at grades A and B, while at A-level boys get more A grade with girls still ahead at grade B.

Teachers questioned by London University's Institute of Education, and Chris Comber, of Leicester University's School of Education, looked at nearly 3,000 exam scripts. 200 questionnaires from school department heads and nine school case studies.

According to teachers who were questioned about the attributes of boys and girls, confidence is the only characteristic in which boys outclass girls.

However, the teachers observed clear differences of approach to A-level work. In English, one teacher commented: "The boys go through it like a Panzer division. Their writing is very clinical, point point, point. Girls are much more, if this then that and I might think this and I might think that . . ."

The study examined the idea that girls do better than boys in coursework and found that in English they did slightly better. But the researchers point out that coursework plays only a small part in the final result.

Most types of literature are equally appealing to both sexes, teachers said, though boys have some difficulty with women poets and, to a lesser extent, women novelists such as Bronte and Woolf.

Jannette Elwood, said: "If what is required at A-level is different from what is required at GCSE then teachers need to communicate this to students. Teachers could do more to explain the nature of assessment at A-level to girls."

QUICKLY

Machete arrest

A man was arrested in Blakenhall, Wolverhampton, last night after police conducted a massive search of the town, following Monday's attack at St Luke's infants' school.

Three children and four adults were still in hospital receiving treatment for their injuries.

Page 4

Cancer breakthrough

A new treatment for breast cancer has been discovered at the Royal Marsden NHS Trust where doctors believe they may have found a safe, effective treatment for the disease which kills 13,000 women in Britain each year.

Page 5

Viewing displeasure

The Broadcasting Standards Council yesterday highlighted the trend towards humiliating pranks and practical jokes in top-rated television programmes.

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news

Orangemen dig in at Drumcree as Catholics flee their homes

MICHAEL STREETER
and JOJO MOYES

Police in Northern Ireland were bracing themselves for further conflict today as the stand-off at Drumcree, Co Armagh, entered its fourth day.

Several hundred Orangemen were gathered near the church where the Royal Ulster Constabulary has erected a blockade to prevent them from marching back into Portadown through a Catholic area.

The scene was calm last night but thousands more Orangemen from across the province were expected to boost the numbers during the evening in a head-to-head confrontation across a barbed wire and concrete fence. Organisers have provided a marquee to protect demonstrators from the rain and laid on substantial catering facilities.

As the day wore on, Orangemen repeated their protest of Monday by blocking scores of routes throughout the province, including major roads in Belfast. The town of Coleraine was believed to be cut off by road.

The RUC was also monitoring routes to the main international airport at Aldergrove, which Orangemen were believed to be targeting as they did 24 hours earlier when they blocked access routes leaving hundreds of people stranded.

A police spokesman said: "We have no reports at the moment of protests at the airport, but the situation is very fluid."

He added: "We cannot be in two places at once. Judging on yesterday's experience we can probably expect some more blockades, demonstrations and some hijacking of vehicles."

The ugly scenes in the early hours of yesterday morning – which are likely to cost the province's economy and tourist industry millions of pounds – saw some of Belfast's worst loyalist violence for many years. Two Catholic schools were damaged.

Little known mediators bid to defuse threat of violence

JOJO MOYES

As political leaders became further entrenched in their stand-off last night, it emerged that talks were taking place at a local level to try to defuse the threat of another night of violence in the province.

Central to these appeared to be the independent organisation The Mediation Network of Northern Ireland, which, according to sources, had been at Drumcree all day trying to broker a compromise.

The Mediation Network, a little known organisation set up in the 1980s to reduce conflict in the province, was credited with averting a full-scale riot in Portadown last year when Orangemen, local residents and the RUC became stuck in an impasse over the marching route.

Headed by Brendan McCullister, a Catholic father of three and Joe Campbell, a Presbyterian elder and full-time mediator, the organisation is partly funded by the Belfast

aged in fires and four Catholic families were forced to leave their homes in the Old Park area after intimidation by gangs of loyalists.

One of the remaining Catholic residents, Maria Darragh, said she would also have to leave. "In the end, the fact is that I am a Catholic living in a Protestant area. We are just going to have to go."

Some of the worst violence occurred in the staunchly loyalist area of Sandy Row after midnight yesterday when the fuel tank of a RUC Land-Rover exploded, slightly injuring a news photographer.

During the night, police wearing riot gear fought running street battles with gangs of loyalist youths. There were also clashes between loyalist and nationalist gangs in the town of Allianlong, with reports of shotgun rounds being fired off.

The outbreak of violence was condemned on all sides. Unionist leaders called on followers to exercise restraint, but the Assistant Grand Master of the Order of Orangemen, Jeffrey Donaldson, warned that further protests were being planned throughout the province in the run up to 12 July – the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne.

The RUC closed all routes to the international airport yesterday. The previous night's trouble meant that airport staff and some passengers had been forced to spend the night there.

Across the province, road-blocks appeared on many major routes. Announcements from the "Orange Information Service" warned that Larne docks, and all roads between Drumcree and Omagh were affected.

Meanwhile hotels and tourist boards revealed that many visitors were leaving the province. The Northern Ireland Tourist Board said it had received reports that many visitors were cutting short their trips because of the fear of further violence and disruption.



In search of safety: Cathy Officer and her 1-year-old son Connor prepare to leave the Catholic Old Park area of Belfast after the outbreak of sectarian attacks

Photograph: Paul Faith/Pacemaker

MICHAEL STREETER

Trimble himself ruled out compromise [along the lines of last year] because of his behaviour afterwards. That compromise has been ruled out by the community.

The SDLP councillor, Ignatius Fox said from Portadown last night that he had given out an invitation for talks yesterday morning but that it had not been taken up. "It seems the situation is remaining the same as the last 12 months," he said.

Meanwhile Jeffrey Donaldson, assistant grandmaster of the Orange Order, was last night equally insistent that there would be no negotiations between the groups.

"It's not our policy to negotiate with any people who have connections with Sinn Fein and the IRA," he said. Asked if there was any hope of a peace settlement, he said: "Well it will come some time. We hope it will come sooner rather than later." But he insisted that the Orangemen would still march down the Garvagh route.

But many local leaders were not optimistic about the immediate prospects for a compromise. Brendan MacCormaigh, of the Garvagh Road Residents Association, said last night: "There's nothing to mediate about. It's between Unionists and the RUC. As far as we're concerned the Orangemen should pack up their bags and go home now. Mr

Sombre Belfast surveys the wreckage of peace process

MICHAEL STREETER

A silent anger simmered in Belfast's Sandy Row last night. Staunch but law-abiding loyalists fumed at what they called extremists in their own camp, terrified that 18 months of peace is crumbling away before their eyes.

One shopkeeper, who asked not to be named, discovered a burning car near his store when he opened up yesterday, the result of a petrol bombing by loyalist groups in the early hours.

Surveying the remains of the vehicle he said despondently: "It's an understatement to say we are upset that the violence has come back from whatever side.

"The silent majority – that 96 per cent of us – don't want to know about it. But no one seems to hear us. We want peace. All this is going to do is drive away business from Belfast. And no one will win from that."

The mood in the streets, some of them still barred by police road-block, was sombre.

for the Unionists and a faint hope for a peaceful resolution.

Sean Smith, 44, said: "The Unionists have got used to having everything their own way. Why don't they march in their own areas as we do?"

John Major should deliver a stiff message to the Unionist leaders, he said. "He should tell them he will send in the Paras to show they are not going to get away with it as they tried to do with us."

He said ordinary people like himself were not Sinn Fein or IRA supporters and just wanted a peaceful life. But he added: "I don't believe now that co-existence can work. Things are going too far. There's only one way this will be resolved and that's by civil war. It's not what I want, but I think that will happen."

Tony Lavery, a caretaker, saw the "Unionist blockade of airports and roads as a direct threat to the nationalists and an omen. "It is as if they are hammering us in and I think this will be their plan for the future."

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

The proportion of newly-qualified teachers recruited by schools has fallen for the first time in a decade, despite growing pupil numbers, according to a new report. The Universities Council for the Education of Teachers suggests that education budget cuts are the most likely reason for the fall in the percentage of students from university teacher-training courses obtaining jobs.

The Department for Education and Employment has said a 50 per cent increase in new entrants is needed by the turn of century to avoid shortages. Since 1986 around three-quarters of students completing university teacher-training courses have found jobs each year. This year the figure is down to 69 per cent. *Judith Judd*

A further turn of the screw against international football hooliganism has been negotiated by the Home Office, it was disclosed last night. Two parliamentary Orders laid before the Commons enact bilateral agreements made with the Republic of Ireland and Norway, under which anyone living in England or Wales who is convicted of a football-related criminal offence in either country after 1 August can be made the subject of a magistrate's court ban on travelling abroad to any specified football match.

The Home Office said that the British law, which already applies to Scotland, Sweden and Italy, could not apply to foreign supporters coming to Britain. *Anthony Bell*

Leaders of London Underground drivers yesterday cancelled a 24-hour stoppage scheduled for next Tuesday ahead of talks today, but threatened nine other strikes to keep up the pressure on management. The decision by Aslef, the train drivers' union, to call off the day-long strike next week will enable it to co-ordinate walkouts with the RMT transport union, which is expected to announce a vote for action today. Under the law, unions must give management seven days' notice of disruption.

Tony West, assistant general secretary of Aslef yesterday announced that walkouts on 18, 25 and 29 July, 7, 13, 23 and 27 August and 5 and 9 September. The action on 25 July would hit cricket fans travelling to the first day of England's first test against Pakistan. *Barrie Clements*

Young women in Africa are twice as likely to have HIV. The virus that causes Aids, as their male peers, according to new research by the United Nations. Yesterday the UN called for Aids campaigners to target women, who they described as "biologically, socially, and economically vulnerable" to the disease. At present about 42 per cent of the 21 million adults living with HIV/AIDS are women and the proportion continues to go up.

In industrialised countries, practically all infections used to occur in men. In Britain, women made up 3.7 per cent of Aids cases up to the end of 1985. By 1995, they had quadrupled, to account for 14 per cent. The pattern is similar in other countries. But it is in the developing world where women are particularly at risk. In Africa south of the Sahara there are already six women with HIV for every five men. More than four-fifths of all infected women get the virus through heterosexual transmission. *Glenda Cooper*

Surveillance cameras are to be used for the first time to film drivers making illegal manoeuvres at busy yellow box junctions, it was announced yesterday. Three junctions in London are to be monitored in the pilot project in an attempt to cut down on accidents and delays.

Motorists caught breaking the law will face an instant £20 fine. The scheme is aimed at preventing drivers from entering box junctions when the exit is blocked. This often causes a traffic jam as vehicles become trapped in the centre. Police also want to deter people from making illegal right and left-hand turns and U-turns, all of which can cause accidents. The system will operate along junctions on the A501 in west London in the Euston and Baker Street areas. *Jason Bennett*

A Briton has been charged with smuggling heroin worth \$10m (£6.5m) after United States customs inspectors found 28lbs of the drug concealed in wood carvings. Steven Bristow, 33, from Essex, had been charged with smuggling the drug, which was seized at John F Kennedy Airport, New York.

Bristow was detained after inspectors took a closer look at two wooden wall carvings that he brought into the US on a Virgin Atlantic flight from London. The seizure was "one of the top five, maybe the top three" drugs finds in New York in recent years, said Thomas Smith, deputy special agent in charge of the customs service's New York office. Mr Smith said the amount seized could lead to sentences of 15 to 20 years in prison and fines of up to \$4m (£2.6m).

Two large passenger aircraft collided on the ground at Heathrow airport because of a flight crew "blind spot" problem, according to an accident report. The crew of a Gulf Air Airbus A340 with 241 passengers on board could not see the left-hand wing-tip of their aircraft from where they were sitting. When the plane moved forward to get into position for take-off, the wing-tip struck the rudder of a British Airways Boeing 757, which was also waiting to take off. The aircraft were damaged, but all passengers were unharmed.

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

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Hadrian's Wall repels the new marauders

When the Romans built their great edifice they didn't account for hordes of tourists

STEPHEN GOODWIN

A mere 1,850 years after the Emperor Hadrian built his wall across northern Britain to keep out the marauding Barbarians, the whole 73-mile length is to benefit from a single strategy to combat the more prosaic menace of the tourist boot and insensitive farmers.

Some 1.5 million people a year visit the wall, homing in on the central section where they like to scramble on the 3-metre thick stone barrier and gaze across the rugged fells, a legionnaire in mind. But the result, in places, has been damage to the fragile archaeology of an acclaimed World Heritage Site (WHS) and a nuisance to farmers and wildlife. Farmers too have exacted a toll on the wall.

In past centuries, its stones were plundered for barns and fields. Today the complaint is of farm buildings and land use which jar with the setting for the finest preserved frontier of the Roman world.

To deal with the competing pressures of visitors and land use, while helping the local economy grow, English Nature yesterday produced the first long-term management strategy for the wall since Hadrian's.

Quite why Hadrian built the wall, beyond wanting to mark

out his northern frontier, remains uncertain. According to a Roman biographer its purpose was "to separate the Romans from the Barbarians". That is no offence to the Picts and Scots who did not appear over the hill until later.

Started in AD122, the fortifications extend from Wallsend on the River Tyne, through Newcastle and its suburbs, west over the craggy uplands of the northern Pennines and on past Carlisle to Bowness-on-Solway. The various ditches, exposed wall, milecastles, forts and civilian settlements all form part of the WHS.

The strategy published yesterday by English Heritage is the result of a 12-month exercise in consultation and compromise. Farmers and landowners, who were appalled at the first draft fearing bureaucratic interference in their activities alongside the wall, gave the revised plan a cautious welcome. But conservationists who had hoped to restore more of the wild feel to the wall's surroundings were correspondingly disappointed.

Launching the management plan at Cawfields, site of one of the encampments along the wall, Sir Jocelyn Stevens, chairman of English Heritage, said the role of the private landowner was crucial. Only about 10 per cent of the remains are



Stonewalled: Sir Jocelyn Stevens, chairman of English Heritage, walks on Hadrian's Wall which attracts 1.5 million visitors a year

Photograph: Tom Pilston

owned and managed purely for the purposes of preservation.

It is neither desirable nor possible to attempt to fossilise or homogenise the character of the land which has to earn its keep," Sir Jocelyn told his audience, which included sever-

al landowners and their representatives.

The production of an overall plan should enable English Heritage and other bodies to win European Union funding to improve tourist services, protect sections of the wall vul-

nerable to erosion under and enhance the landscape.

The biggest change over the consultation period has been the shrinking of the buffer zone or "setting" alongside the wall. This has come down from some 5km on either side

in open country to between 500 metres and 1km.

The farmers' anxieties were

forcefully put at public meetings. But conservationists regret the back-peddling. Ian Brodie, secretary of the Friends of the Lake District, which monitors

the Cumbria section of the wall, described the plan as "timid".

More could have been done to

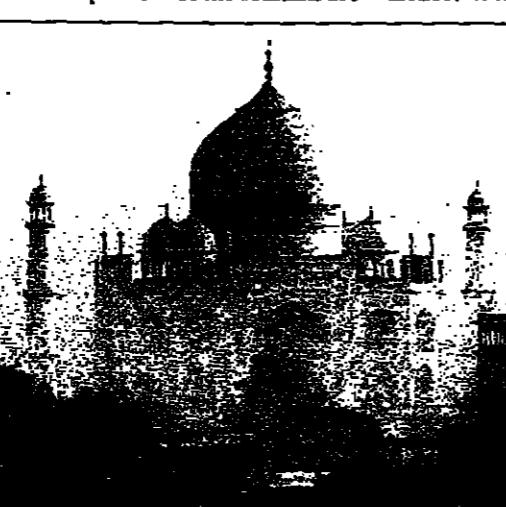
protect the setting, he said.

A Hadrian's Wall Co-ordi-

nation Unit has been set up under director Christopher Young. He will be working alongside a representative of the wall-tourism partnership and a Countryside Commission officer responsible for the Hadrian's Wall National Trail - a coast-to-coast walk in the footsteps of the legionnaires.

Tej Mahal: Its under threat of erosion from acid rain caused by nearby industry, burning high sulphur coal, major roads and thousands of tiny, petro-

burning electricity generators which start up during the area's routine power cuts. Unesco, the Asian Development Bank and the Indian government have collaborated on a \$100m (165m) scheme to tackle the air pollution, but the government has stalled its implementation.



Theft, terror and tourism ravage world history

NICHOLAS SCHOON
Environment Correspondent

They have survived centuries of neglect, warfare, vandalism and robbery to become the world's greatest tourist attractions.

But today, UNESCO's World Heritage Sites - the *crème de la crème* of monuments and architecture - still face these same threats, along with some new ones, such as heavy-duty tourism and air pollution.

No one is too surprised that important sites - such as the Great Pyramids of Giza - are now under threat.

But even in wealthy countries, such as Britain, some of our most precious ancient structures are at risk. Last month, eight of the great stones in the 4,000-year-old circle at Avebury, Wiltshire, were defaced by graffiti, which inspired copycat attacks in Somerset and Wiltshire.

The attacks are one new worry for curators, whose chief concern until now has been coping with the pressure of growing numbers of visitors and the surrounding 20th century blight.

However, since then the historic town has undergone extensive repair and restoration.

Sir Jocelyn Stevens, chairman of English Heritage, yesterday said two of Britain's 14 World Heritage Sites, the Tower of London and the Houses of Parliament were "absolutely wrecked by traffic".

Another cause for shame is the nearby buildings and structures which now seem extremely ugly and inappropriate.

Britain's worst example is the Sixties visitor centre next to Stonehenge, a brutal concrete construction which funnels visitors into an underpass leading them beneath the A344 road to the stones.

Yet at least the monuments themselves are intact, and more popular than ever. England's ten World Heritage Sites attract over 13 million visitors a year, half of them from overseas, with huge gains to the national and local economies.

The problems facing Britain's sites pale in comparison with those in Third World nations.

The huge temple complex of Angkor Wat in Cambodia suffered previously from almost 20 years of war. It was peppered

with bullets and shell fragments and surrounded by mine fields. Then the jungle invaded, with tree roots rising apart its stones. Carved masonry was stolen.

Even so, says Ann Le Maistre of UNESCO in Paris, there are grounds for hope since the 200sq km, 1,200-year-old monument was inscribed on the list of World Heritage Sites in 1992.

Visitors to the monument are increasing, giving the Cambodian government an incentive to conserve it. Legislation to preserve monuments has been enacted and a national organisation set up to look after it.

In the next century it will be commonplace for tourists arriving at a great site to be offered two very different experiences.

The first is a quick round of an interpretive centre, where the history and function of the place would be explained, aided by virtual reality techniques.

The second experience will be to actually enter the site itself.

The visitor doing this will be expected to commit much more time - half or all of a day - possibly pay more and pre-book.

Stonehenge: Andries: Britain's most important monument spoilt by heavy traffic on the A303. Roads next to it and an ugly, inadequate visitors' centre. English Heritage has ambitious, expensive plans which involve gradually closing off the roads, building a new visitors' centre more than one mile away and allowing the stones again something they have not been able to do for many years.

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Dubrovnik: This treasure of the Adriatic in Croatia was heavily shelled by the Serb forces during the conflict between Croatia and Serbia during the early 1990s.

However, since then the historic town has undergone extensive repair and restoration.

Churches resume move to unity

ANDREW BROWN
Religious Affairs Correspondent

The Methodist Church and the Church of England yesterday announced plans to resume their progress towards union, twice derailed in the last 30 years by deep disagreements within and between the churches about the nature and function of priesthood.

The new proposals have emerged from "talks" which included representatives of the Anglo-Catholic wing of the Church of England, which has twice successfully scuppered attempts at unity.

This factor, observers say, explains why the new plans are much less ambitious in scope and speed than previous attempts at union. The Church of England's General Synod will not consider the report of the informal talks until November next year, and the Methodist conference will not debate them until the following summer. This is a delay to give all parties concerned, and the other Christian churches in this country time to make their views known.

The central difficulty holding up previous attempts at union has been the belief of some Anglicans that Methodist ministers are not priests in the same sense as Anglicans are, having failed to preserve the apostolic succession.

In 1972, the most ambitious attempt to reunite the two churches founded when the Church of England's General

Synod rejected a formula for mutual recognition in which both churches would supply whatever graces might be lacking in the other: the evangelicals objected to it because it suggested that Methodist ministers might lack some grace available to Anglo-Catholics, while the Catholics objected because it did not state this lack clearly enough. Since then both churches have declined in membership, influence and confidence.

The new proposals suggest that candidates coming forward for ordination in either church should in future be ordained into both, though this would not be obligatory. Many candidates from both churches already train together.

Ordination into the other church would also be offered to serving ministers who wanted it. However, the Methodists, who ordain women both as priests and as their equivalent of bishops, have agreed not to interfere in the Church of England's special arrangements for bishops and priests who cannot accept women priests.

Formal talks about unity will not start until the autumn of 1998 at the earliest. Considerable difficulties, however, will remain. For example, Methodists are governed by their annual conference. The Church of England is governed partly by bishops and partly by the General Synod. Women may rise to the highest ranks of Methodism, and have done so; women cannot be ordained as bishops in the Church of England.

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news

Man arrested over school machete attack

Police find suspect in rubbish chute at block of flats

REBECCA FOWLER

Police last night arrested a man in connection with the machete attack on an infants school in Wolverhampton.

Around 30 officers in riot gear went to Villiers House, a tower block near St Luke's infants school where three children and four adults were injured in the attack on Monday.

About 20 minutes after going into the flats, police led out a man, his head covered with a blue blanket. Earlier in the day police spent several hours searching the flats which were the known home of Horrett Irving Campbell, a man they said was wanted for questioning. A large crowd gathered to watch the police operation, climbing onto fences and every other possible vantage point to see what was going on. They shouted abuse as a man was brought out and put in a police van, which was driven away with siren blaring, followed by a back-up police car.

Daren Bird, 25, who lives in Villiers House, watched the man being led away. He said police found a man hiding in the rubbish chute on the ninth floor. "It is a great relief that they have found someone," he said.

"They have searched that building more than once. If you're going to search a building you

should do it properly - rubbish chutes and all."

Police had earlier twice searched the block - for several hours last night and again for five hours today. Detectives had issued an alert over Mr Campbell, 32, after a man was seen to go into Villiers House after the horrific attack on adults and children.

The playground at St Luke's infants school was empty and the gates were locked yesterday in Blakenhall, Wolverhampton, as tension mounted over the search.

Three children were yesterday still in hospital with serious injuries. Rhema Chopra and Francesca Quintyne, both four, had deep cuts to their faces and one also had surgery for a broken jaw and severed ear. Ahmed Pervez, three, was transferred to Birmingham children's hospital with serious head and thigh wounds. The four adults who also received lacerations in the attack were detained in hospital in a stable condition, but risk severe scarring.

Parents kept their children indoors yesterday. Lynda Westwood, whose granddaughter and niece attend the school, said: "We're shocked, and we're angry ... The sight of those children yesterday will haunt me for a long time."

The attacker climbed over a school wall on Monday afternoon and attacked the children

and adults who had been invited to St Luke's for a teddy bears' picnic to prepare the three- and four-year-olds for their first school term in September.

Lisa Poole, 21, a nursery nurse, was injured when she leapt to defend the children. From hospital yesterday she described her horror as she saw the intruder. "There was a lot of screaming - and a man came lunging towards me, but he was laughing."

She added: "I grabbed a child under each arm and ran back towards the nursery, but he pulled me back and hit me on the back of the head."

Roy Lockwood, director of education, said that security measures at the school were "comparable with those in the vast majority of schools nationally. To make changes would be a question of moving security in all schools up a whole different level."

St Luke's staff and governors were undecided on whether the school would reopen before the end of term.

Denise Bennett, the school's headteacher, yesterday paid a tearful tribute yesterday to those at the teddy bears' picnic. "The speed and control with which my staff acted, together with parents, certainly saved many lives. It was an horrendous scene, the likes of which I hope I will never see again."

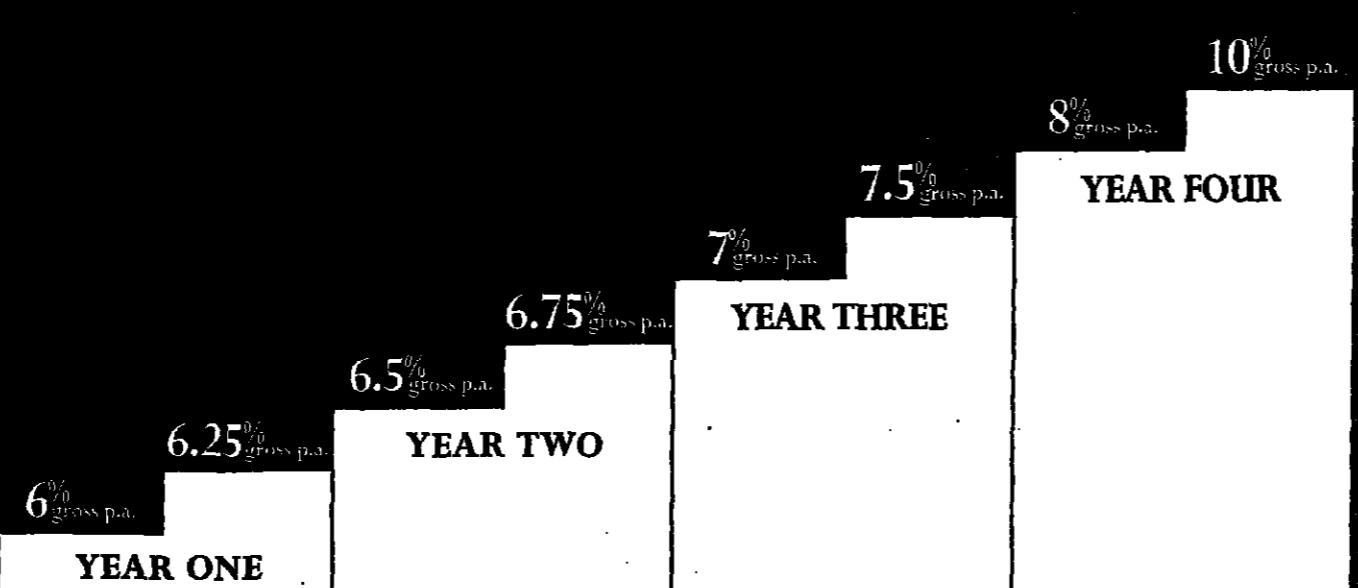


Picnic victim: Ahmed Pervez, three, in Birmingham Children's Hospital yesterday with serious head and thigh wounds

Photograph: David Jones

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INVESTMENTS

Inquiry told Hamilton 'slipped through net'

JAMES CUSICK

Midway through the Dunblane inquiry, Lord Cullen was told starkly by a senior police officer that "someone got through the system". After noting that Thomas Hamilton had been investigated by police six times over 15 years with "no action" taken, Lord Cullen may conclude that the system itself needs overhaul.

Since 29 May, the inquiry has spent a week for each minute that Hamilton spent inside Dunblane Primary School, when he slaughtered 16 schoolchildren and their teacher. The Cullen report - expected to be delivered in September - will make recommendations on the control of firearms, schools' security and the vetting of adults who work with schoolchildren.

This week's attack on a Wolverhampton infants school will have given Lord Cullen's report added significance. The terms "no evidence" and "no action" have been re-

peated constantly during the Dunblane inquiry. The first policeman to investigate Thomas Hamilton now complains in the late 1970s made by parents whose children had attended a boys' club in Stirling.

Detective Sergeant James Kindness thought Hamilton had tried to subvert parental authority by showering gifts on favoured boys. But he found no evidence. No action was taken.

Later Mr Kindness told the inquiry he could not recall the own report to the Criminal Intelligence Office in November 1981, which noted that Hamilton was a suspected homosexual and prone to influence boys against their parents. The report was never acted upon.

In 1988, Hamilton was the subject of four separate police investigations. Strathclyde Police acted on a complaint over the way he ran summer camps on an island on Loch Lomond. Police thought they had enough evidence to charge Hamilton with assault, after he spanked

a child with a table tennis bat. But no action was taken.

Hamilton was investigated again some months later, after he photographed two children holding revolvers and a semi-automatic machine gun. But the parents made no complaint and no action was taken.

Two years later Hamilton once more came to police attention over his latest camp. Detective Sergeant Paul Hughes, now a chief inspector, submitted a report to the Prosecutor's office detailing 10 charges he believed could be brought. He also recommended that Hamilton should, as a minimum precaution, be prevented from having his firearms licence renewed. However, the police superintendent who renewed Hamilton's gun licence in 1989 and 1992 knew of no police investigations.

In his summing up, Colin Campbell, QC, said: "No one in Central Scotland Police ever applied their minds to Hamilton's fitness to own guns."

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Breast cancer team reduce risk of surgery

GLENDY COOPER

A pioneering treatment for breast cancer, which kills 13,000 women in Britain each year, has been discovered by doctors.

Women with large tumours usually face surgery to remove either the lump or the entire breast. But doctors at the Royal Marsden NHS Trust believe they may have found a safer, more effective treatment.

The new method relies upon giving the woman chemotherapy prior to an operation. In the past there was no means of measuring the success of drugs used, but Dr Paul Ellis, a research fellow, believes his team may have pinpointed the way the drugs work.

"We have shown for the first time that chemotherapy causes cancer cells to self-destruct," Dr Ellis said at the launch of the Institute of Cancer Research's annual report yesterday. "The drugs trigger a complex chain of events known as apoptosis in which cells destroy themselves."

"It is early days yet, but we have already seen that treatment with drugs before surgery

can shrink the tumour or even cause it to disappear," he said. "The problem is that, until now, we've had no way of knowing if the drugs that one patient has responded to will benefit someone else, until her course of treatment is complete."

"Inevitably, this means some women are suffering several months of unpleasant treatment with little or no benefit."

In clinical trials at the Royal Marsden, which have involved around 30 women so far, doctors perform a biopsy using a fine needle to remove cells from the tumour before chemotherapy treatment is started, and then again afterwards.

By measuring the rate at which cells self-destruct, doctors will be able to determine the most appropriate drugs to use. In other words, it should be possible to provide tailor-made treatment for patients.

In successful cases, the need for major surgery—including the removal of one or both breasts—has been lessened or avoided altogether.

"No two breast cancers are the same," said Dr Ellis, whose

work recently won him the prestigious 1996 ASCO Fellowship Award. "Every patient has a biological make-up that is slightly different. We are applying technology so that we can fingerprint each patient's tumour early on, so the woman does not have to undergo unnecessary treatment. What we don't know is whether it gives women better survival rates."

But Ian Fentiman, deputy director of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund's clinical oncology unit at Guy's Hospital, advised caution.

"It would be nice to think this is the end of mastectomies, but it isn't," he said. "We have to say the results are early, and we know that they are necessarily going to lead to improvements."

"When we did a similar study at the ICRF, we found that when we explained to patients exactly what was involved in chemotherapy, then surgery, then radiotherapy, only 50 per cent were prepared to go through with it. The rest of the patients opted just to have a mastectomy, rather than go through all that."

Anger of asthma sufferers

COLIN BROWN

Chief Political Correspondent

Ministers faced criticism from asthma sufferers and family doctors last night, after refusing to make the reduction of asthma a key target in the Health of the Nation campaign.

The decision disappointed doctors and more than 2 million sufferers who have been pressuring the Government to include asthma in the list of diseases to be tackled by special measures, despite its exclusion from the Health of the Nation strategy launched in July 1992, by Virginia Bottomley, then Secretary of State for Health.

Although the incidence of asthma is increasing, for reasons which have yet to be fully un-

derstood, it will not be included among the targets set for reducing the rates of death or serious illness from diseases such as breast and cervical cancer, mental illness, coronary heart disease and strokes.

The targets have been used to measure success or failure in dealing with diseases in the priority list. The strategy has been broadly welcomed by all parties, and there was widespread support for asthma to be included. But the Government slipped out a Commons written answer, under cover of other health and environment initiatives, rejecting the calls.

John Horam, the junior Health Minister, said: "We have considered very carefully the case for asthma to be given key

area status, but have decided against it. We have concluded that improving the management of asthma remains the responsibility of the NHS working partnership with organisations and there is limited scope for additional cross-government working."

The refusal to include asthma in the targets will be seen as a cost-saving measure to avoid paying GPs extra amounts for seeing asthma sufferers.

Mr Horam said the Department of Health was committed to an extensive research programme into asthma. The National Asthma Campaign would commission NHS-sponsored research on the effectiveness of treatments and services for asthma sufferers.

Barely recognisable: The Chanel collection breaks with the past. Photograph: Sheridan Morley

Chanel collection: Veteran designer omits trademark logo to foil the fashion fakers



Simple chic: Lagerfeld back to basics. Photograph: Reuter

Lagerfeld strips away the detail

TAMSIN BLANCHARD

Fashion Editor

There was not a trademark interlinked pair of Cs in sight at Chanel's haute couture show for Autumn/Winter '96 yesterday, as the fashion house aimed for simplicity—and beating the counterfeits.

Last season, Karl Lagerfeld had pared down Chanel's show to the intimate setting of the Imperial Suite at the Ritz Hotel. This season, he pared down the clothes too, so that at times, they were barely recognisable as Chanel. And he managed to defeat the copyists by being so clean of logos there was nothing to rip off.

For day-wear, the closely fitting calf-length coats in soft violet, black, British racing green and quiet navy 'bouclé', were worn over shiny Lycra footless tights, a dubious throwback to the 1980s. Some were fastened with a zip, without a gilt button in sight. And when there were buttons, the natural vehicle for the house's signature, interlinked Cs, were replaced by a plain circle with a tiny diamond in the centre, or by a sprig of dia-

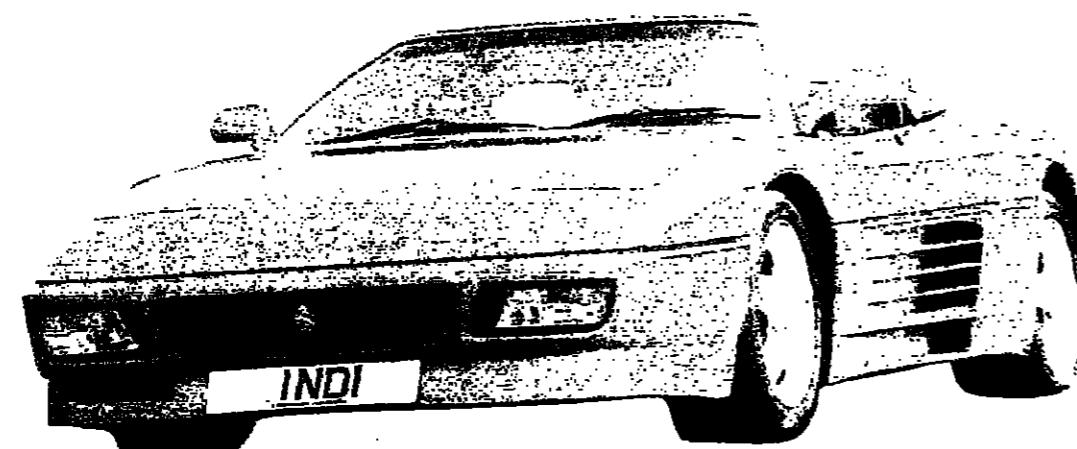
monte with a pearl. The only sign of that most famous of fashion logos was on subtle little wallets, where it was quietly stamped on the leather.

The couture house fights a constant battle against copyists: the logo turns up everywhere from T-shirts in Bangkok markets to handbags in New York's Chinatown.

Last month, Chanel placed a full page advert in the trade paper, *Woman's Wear Daily*, sternly warning fashion editors to be careful how they use the Chanel name. And at the ready-to-wear show last March, photographers were required to sign a statement declaring that they would not release any of their pictures onto the Internet. Few signed then, but this season, they had no choice if they were to be allowed access to the catwalk show.

Yves Saint Laurent announced last week that it was taking the opposite attack and embracing the new information technology with open arms: their show today will be transmitted live on the Internet, a clever way of at least having some control over the images that are released.

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politics

Portillo goes into battle with a counter-plonker strategy

It is almost exactly a year since Michael Portillo did not stand against John Major for the Conservative Party leadership. Instead, "friends" had 40 phone lines installed in a house near Parliament – just in case – and made Mr Portillo look like a plonker. As a result, John Redwood slithered into pole position as darling of the Right.

Then, last October, Mr P made a preposterous speech to Tory Party conference, attacking non-existent proposals to abolish separate armed forces and merge everything into a



DAVID AARONOVITCH

Euro-army. Later, it transpired that this speech had been written by the same "friends" who were responsible for the BT debacle. Mr Portillo looked like a

plonker again. And John Redwood now found himself a head and five coils in front.

Since then nothing has been heard of the Defence Secretary.

Quite possibly wondering whether his "friends" may not actually be relatives of Mr Redwood, Mr Portillo has determined to do nothing remotely plonkerish, which – in his case – means doing nothing at all.

He knows that he has less than a year to cultivate leadership gravitas, at which point his pure sex appeal for the Attilas of the backbenches will see

him pulverise the cold-blooded Redwood. So yesterday, I went to see his counter-plonker act at work during Defence questions. Here is my report.

The turn-out for Portillo was good. A substantial proportion of lady backbenchers appeared, decked out in their most fetching outfits, including the divine soprano-geanier Dame Peggy Fenner (Medway) in a flowing royal blue number. She did not take her eyes off him for three-quarters of an hour.

But the new, sober Portillo does not play to the gallery.

Where other ministers treat virtually any question from Opposition members with a ballistic contempt (e.g. Nicholas Soames's response to some tedious bit of Labour point-scoring: "What utter claptrap, the most ignorant, ridiculous" etc etc), Michael's most offensive response was to comment mildly that he did not think that a particular proposition was "a very good idea".

When not answering questions, he scruched himself up on the front bench, not talking, or smiling, or gesticulating, or making V-signs, or lounging about with his legs wide open, or doing any of the things that most ministers enjoy.

Only two things remained of the old, exciting Plonker Portillo. The first is the extraordinary attention he is still paying to his appearance. His double-breasted dark grey suit was superb – to die for, in fact. And he retains those handsome, if slightly squashed, features – features which remind one of a luscious, almost perfect piece of fruit at a greengrocer's, which unfortunately is just

beginning to become overripe.

Above the fruit is the elaborate coiffure of the hair. It must take him hours every morning to reconstruct.

Parted in the centre, the left

bang is swept upwards, and then allowed to flop back coquettishly. It is his liberal wing.

The right, by contrast, maintains an uncompromising, arching curve, a determined Baroque sweep, defying gravity. There is something in this haircut for all sections of the party.

The second holdover was demonstrated in his answer to one of those Tory questions about Tony Blair, CND and the nuclear trigger.

According to the Defence Secretary, the Labour leader had said that he was "in favour of pressing the button".

Opposition members looked shocked, as well they might: surely Tony would wait for a war first? This was a novel twist on "New Labour, New Danger".

But what Mr Portillo had meant, of course, was that Mr Blair was prepared to push the button. Five per cent of him is still a plonker.

Commons confusion as MPs vote on pay

JOHN RENTOUX
Political Correspondent

The House of Commons was heading for a night of confusion and sanctimony tonight as the Government tabled a series of motions allowing MPs to vote on any number of ways on the sensitive issue of their own pay.

The main choice, between the "restraint" of a 3 per cent rise and the independently-assessed "fair" rise of 26 per cent, has been complicated by the Senior Salaries Review Body's proposal to cut generous car-mileage allowances.

With both Conservative and Labour front benches urging restraint, Government whips last night predicted a close vote, with some predicting that MPs would vote to accept the review body's pay rise and keep mileage allowances as they are – the most generous option available.

This would add £9,000 to MPs' present £34,000 salary, with a separate vote on bigger increases for ministers, taking the Prime Minister's salary up £60,000 to £143,000.

But many MPs earn a significant amount of tax-free income from ample 74p-a-mile mileage allowances, which the review body's recommendation is asking them to give up for a similar amount of taxable salary.

Michael Stern, a Tory MP and accountant who handles the

Who's who in salaries review body

Sir Michael Perry: Retiring as chairman of Unilever in September. Salary £318,950 plus annual pension contributions of more than an MP's salary, £35,880.

Michael Beloff QC: Head of barrister's chambers. Estimated annual earnings £500,000. Tony Blair's wife Cherie Booth is another high-earning member of the same chambers.

Rosemary Day: Self-employed management consultant. Earnings unknown. Also a member of the Legal Aid Advisory Board.

Gordon Housman: Retired as managing director of Boots last year. Salary at Boots £454,000. Also chairman of the Armed Services Pay Review Body.

Sir Sydney Lipworth QC: Non-executive chairman of Zeneca and non-executive deputy chairman of NatWest. Salaries total £202,000 last year for two part-time jobs, at Zeneca for only seven months of the year, according to Labour Research Department.

Patrick Mann: Director of external affairs at J Walter Thompson. Non-executive director of British Gas. Earnings at JWT not known (subsidiary of WPP, a private company).

Yve Newbold: Chief executive of Pro-Ned, headhunters. Salary was in excess of £200,000 as company secretary of Hanson until last year. Also non-executive director of BT. Hosts monthly breakfast at the Ritz for top business women.

Mark Sheldon: Consultant to City law firm Linklater and Paines (former senior partner). Annual earnings as a senior partner estimated at £700,000. Former President of the Law Society.

Sir Anthony Wilson: Retired permanent secretary of the Government Accounting Service. Salary range of PAs now £90,000 to £154,500.

tax affairs of several of his colleagues, said that some of them would be worse off on balance if the full review body package were implemented.

Chris Mullin, the Labour MP who has campaigned against an inflation-plus increase for MPs, said he knew that some of his colleagues drove to and from their constituencies in order to earn money to subsidise

their constituency and Commons offices. But others simply regarded it as a perk which made up for what they regarded as inadequate basic salaries.

Further complexities have been added to tonight's open-ended succession of votes by a series of amendments tabled overnight on issues ranging from pensions to outside earnings. The 120 government ministers are under instruction to vote for the 3 per cent increase, but many are expected to absent themselves.

Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, has also favoured 3 per cent. But the 80 frontbench Labour MPs are likely to split over Tony Blair's lead in urging a vote for restraint. Up to nine members of the shadow Cabinet resisted attempts by Mr Blair to persuade them to vote for 3 per cent.

The inquiry by the Senior Salaries Review Body was set up by the Prime Minister in February after 298 MPs of all parties signed a motion calling for an independent review. The body's report, published last week, said a £9,000 increase for MPs was justified on grounds of "international comparability, heavy parliamentary workloads, increased lobbying and constituency expectations, and the need to attract able candidates". The exact figure was set simply by uprating the 1983 recommendation of £19,000 a year, which was reduced as a voluntary act of pay restraint.

As for ministers, whose higher recommended increases would not come into effect until after the election, the review body says: "We believe that additional recognition of the job weight of the Prime Minister and Cabinet ministers is long overdue."



Deadly crop: Christian Aid's Garden of Life and Death at the Hampton Court Palace Flower Show focuses on the ruin of farm land worldwide by minefields. The Government is being pressed to ban landmine exports. Photograph: Jane Baker

and from their constituencies in order to earn money to subsidise

their constituency and Commons offices. But others simply regarded it as a perk which made up for what they regarded as inadequate basic salaries.

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DAILY POEM

Canteen Song

Preston Station Buffet 4am July 1916.

By Phoebe Hesketh

*Green flag and whistle
Shrill through clouding steam
As the panting train,
Loaded with cheering tommies,
Jerks into life.*

*Living and dead
Living and dead
The living are gone
To add to the dead.*

*In the canteen
Plump ladies in blue overalls
Turn away rolling up their sleeves
To empty the urns, clattering cups and spoons
Louder than thoughts.*

*Yet some are weeping,
Some are yawning,
None are greeting this midsummer morning
With more than flickering hope.*

*Living and dead
Living and dead
The living are gone
To add to the dead.*

*A month ahead
And the signal falls
To greet the train blowing sparks and steam
As it screams to a stop.*

*Two cheers for the living
Though all are crippled
And many already half dead.*

*Here comes the Red Cross,
The stretcher-bearers
And valiant VADs
Give a thought to the widows
And children losers
And bearers as much as these.*

*So the living return
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– a British father's bizarre family battle

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news

Drink poses greater threat to women

LIZ HUNT
Health Editor

Sometimes it's hard to be a woman. New research into gender differences between alcoholics suggests that drink for drink we get drunk faster and do more harm to our bodies than men while doing so.

And whether we imbibe or not, scientists have found that year on year, we lose more of the useful bits of our brains sooner than men. A mixture of hormones, chromosomes, and enzymes are to blame.

Professor Karl Mann, from the Addiction Research Unit at Tuebingen University in southern Germany, told an international meeting of psychiatrists yesterday that liver cirrhosis, brain damage, and cognitive impairment such as memory loss and reduced powers of reasoning, start earlier in women alcoholics.

"When you compare the stage at which they enter treatment, women with almost six years of [alcohol] dependency have the same degree of cognitive impairment as men with ten years of dependency," Professor Mann said.

Women studied by Professor Mann's team were also more likely to suffer from anxiety, depression and other addictive disorders than men. Six months after a six-week course of in-pa-

tient treatment, more of the women had relapsed into alcoholism than men.

In a second study presented at the meeting, Dr Declan Murphy, a consultant psychiatrist at the Institute of Psychiatry in London, said there were "significant" differences between the sexes in brain ageing. These occurred in parts of the brain associated with memory and the ability to locate oneself in time and place. They are also areas which show abnormalities in brain diseases such as late-onset schizophrenia and Alzheimer's Disease.

Dr Murphy said there were sex differences in the symptoms associated with these diseases which give clues to differences in ageing between the sexes.

Women appear to lose more brain tissue as they age in areas of the brain linked with Alzheimer's Disease. It is known that female sufferers experience memory abnormalities earlier – involving an area of the brain known as the hippocampus – and this influenced by levels of sex hormones such as oestrogen. Women also experience earlier deterioration in the parietal lobe of the brain which controls their ability to manipulate objects in space.

Men show more abnormalities in the frontal lobe and tend to lose control over their impulsive behaviour and irritability as they grow older.

down alcohol before it enters the blood stream.

"A woman weighing 60kg will get drunk more quickly than a man weighing 60kg because of this," Professor Mann said. He studied 57 women and 62 men who drank on average 18 to 20 units a day – one unit is equivalent to half a pint of ordinary beer or lager, a small glass of

Tough new measures pledged over stalkers

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Legal Affairs Editor

Headteachers or the police could be given the right to take out injunctions against suspicious people found loitering near schools under proposals to toughen penalties on stalkers announced by the Government yesterday.

The suggestion came as David Maclean, the Home Office minister, pledged to legislate for three new legal measures to curb stalking in the next session of Parliament.

A consultation paper proposes a new civil injunction, breach of which would be a criminal offence punishable by up to five years in jail; a higher level criminal offence for activity causing people to fear for their safety, carrying a maximum penalty of five years in prison; an unlimited fine or

both; and a lower level criminal offence of causing harassment, alarm and distress, with a maximum penalty of six months prison, a £5,000 fine or both.

But Mr Maclean said the proposed new civil measure could also be extended from the classic stalking situation to "third party" injunctions brought by the police or "possibly, in the light of recent events, a headmaster could take out an injunction against someone hanging around the school playground."

The move is geared to situations where the activities of stalkers or other potential offenders have not yet threatened any victims and of which victims are oblivious. "But there may be instances where the police fear that such a course of conduct may, unless brought to an end, lead on to actual harm to the victim," the document says.

In a rare exception to the normal rule in criminal law, convictions for the proposed new offences would not depend on proving that the stalker intended to cause distress, because of the difficulty in proving intent where harassment takes the form of unsolicited "gifts".

Vandalism mystery: Headstones damaged in three cemeteries in northern France



Nothing sacred: Smashed and damaged headstones at Aval Wood military cemetery, where 407 British, three Australian, and one German are buried. They all perished during the German offensive of 1918. Photograph: Brian Harris

French shamed by attack on war graves

STEVE BOGGAN

There was shame and embarrassment among the people of northern France yesterday when the Commonwealth War Graves Commission revealed that three British war cemeteries had been desecrated by vandals in the space of 48 hours.

War graves officials in France received a steady stream of calls from apologetic French people after police reported that 112 headstones at Aval Wood military cemetery, near Lille, had been knocked over on Sunday night. Then came the news that 51 out of 54 headstones had been broken at Bonyans cemetery, near Arras, and a further three had been damaged at the nearby Orange Hill cemetery the following evening.

Officially, police and war graves commission staff said there was no connection between the attacks – such incidents happen periodically – but concern has reached the highest levels of the French government. Pierre Pasquini, the minister whose department is responsible for upkeep of the cemeteries, is due to visit Aval Wood today. During the attack there, the cemetery's book of remembrance was burnt.

The three cemeteries are about an hour's drive apart," said Jeremy Gee, director of information for the War Graves Commission. "There is no evidence to suggest that the attacks are in any way linked, but obviously we hope it isn't a group of people driving from cemetery to cemetery doing damage.

"There is a possibility that the second and third attacks were copycat incidents, but that isn't much consolation. There may be more when the attacks are reported in the media."

Mr Gee said British and French staff who maintain the graves had been deeply upset by the incident. They had to deal with a steady stream of inquiries from anxious relatives concerned that the headstone of a family member might have been destroyed. Nearly all the men buried at the three sites died during the First World War.

"We don't have lists yet, but when we do we will call the people involved," he said. "Most of the headstones are unbroken and can be easily replaced. The rest will be repaired and put back in place. We have also had a lot of calls from sympathetic French people who feel ashamed at what has happened. We have been thanking them for calling, but it isn't their fault. We have plenty of vandals of our own here in England."

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New Jersey tries to seize back the huddled masses

DAVID USBORNE
New York

It is a stifling summer afternoon on Ellis Island and the "huddled masses" are swarming off the tourist ferry on to the dock. Brows dripping and video cameras whirring, many are in search of a glimpse of the experience of ancestors whose first steps on American soil were taken here - the immigrants' gateway to the land of opportunity. It is a place for sightseeing and reflection. There are no UN peacekeeping troops here - yet.

For, almost unbelievably, Ellis Island, a small but celebrated speck in the mouth of New York Harbour, has become the subject of a legal dispute: nobody is sure who it belongs to.

Beginning this morning, the United States Supreme Court in Washington will become the venue of a most unusual trial. The litigant is the state of New Jersey, which, in a fit of unneighbourly pique, is suing New York state for jurisdiction of the island.

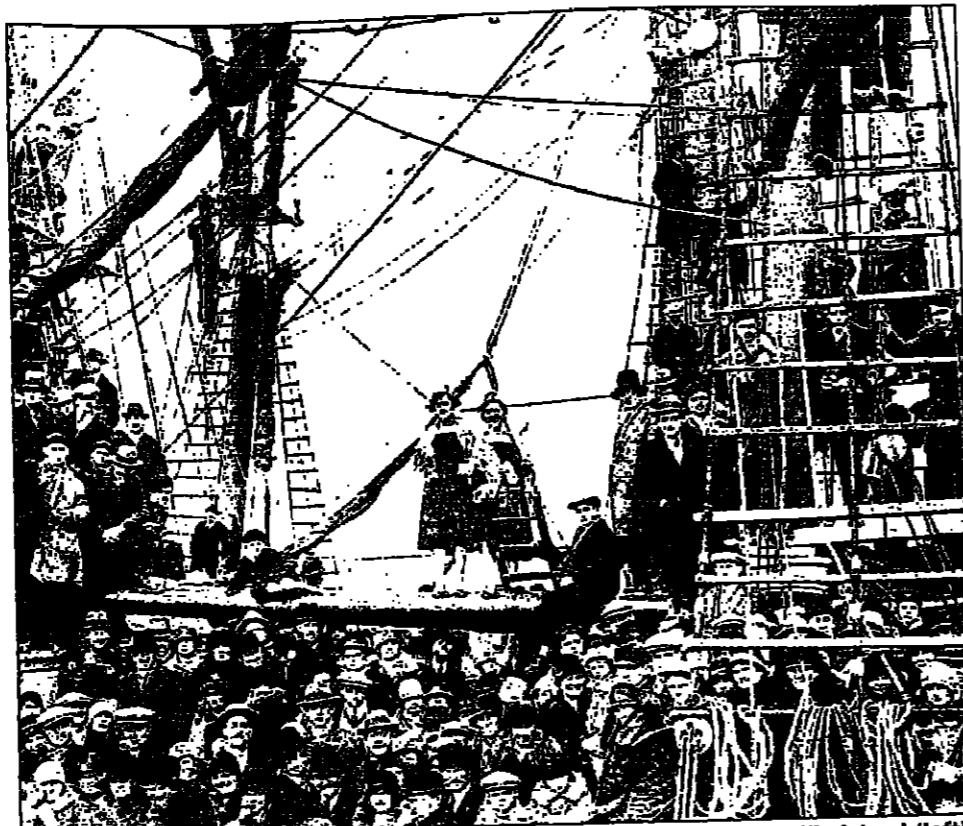
Expected to last for about a month, the trial will be the first to be heard from its original stages at the Supreme Court since 1790. According to the Constitution, the justices of this court alone must be the arbiters of territorial disputes between states - to avert an outbreak of military hostilities.

The lure of ownership is not hard to comprehend. Almost incidental is the promise of tax revenue generated by the millions of tourists who visit Ellis Island every year and criss the museum, which opened in 1990. More powerful is the site's symbolism. No fewer than 40 per cent of all Americans can trace their ancestry to a man, woman or child who landed here.

Presiding over the case will be Paul Verkuil, a law professor at New York's Columbia University, whom both sides will present with sheaves of historical documents, including records of the original 400-year-old land grants extended by King Charles II. Once the hearings are completed, the burden of making a final decision will go to the Supreme Court's justices, who may not offer a final verdict for months, even years.

"We feel simply that New York has usurped a piece of New Jersey's property, and the old records prove fairly conclusively that this is New Jersey's land," argues Hope Alswang, the director of New Jersey's Historical Commission. On her side, geography: Ellis Island lies just 1,300 feet from the New Jersey shoreline and a full two miles from Manhattan.

The trial will turn on an agreement struck between the two states in 1834, under which New York won control of the barely three acres that constituted Ellis Island then. Each state, meanwhile, gained ownership of submerged territory on



Entering the promised land: immigrants waiting to be transferred to Ellis Island (left) and a new arrival pledges his loyalty to the American flag



Photographs: FPG International

their respective sides of the island. Early in this century, Ellis Island was expanded to cover 24 acres, with landfill extending towards New Jersey. That, say New Jersey's lawyers, made Ellis Island theirs.

But cultural and sentimental considerations tie Ellis Island more closely with New York than New Jersey. The immigrant steamships would first dock at Manhattan, before their human freight sailed in small ferries to the island for processing. A third of the 16 million people who passed through it settled in New York. Visit Ellis Island today and your eye is drawn not towards drab Jersey City, but to the towers of southern Manhattan.

A quick survey of visitors and workers on the island suggests opinion falls heavily in New York's favour. "New Jersey may have geography as its claim, but it's not going to happen," said Jessica Lang, who works for the foundation that restored Ellis Island for tourists in the Eighties. She continues, perhaps less persuasively than she realises: "It's like Scotland claiming independence; everyone knows it's part of Britain".

"It has to be New York," agrees Michael Garrett, who was among hordes of tourists visiting the island as well as the neighbouring Statue of Liberty monument (which is not being contested in the suit). "That's where most of the immigrants passed through."

Like many, however, Mr Garrett admits that at the end of the day, he hardly cares and is puzzled that New Jersey is wasting money on the issue. "I don't think this going to be the beginning of the second Civil War, do you?"

Clinton and Bibi manage show of amity

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

Benjamin Netanyahu met President Clinton yesterday for the first time as Israeli Prime Minister, and put aside a series of differences over the path to Middle Eastern peace in a public show of amity between Israel and its most important friend and ally.

In that official hailed as a sign that things were going well, the Oval Office talks over-shot their appointed time by 45 minutes. Smiling and relaxed, Mr Netanyahu spoke of "productive discussions" during a brief break for a stroll in the White House rose garden.

But behind yesterday's cordial facade, deep problems still lurked. Washington is ready to be patient and accommodating as the Likud leader elaborates his strategy for negotiating with the Arabs - but not to the extent of dropping the land-for-peace formula that has underpinned the US-sponsored "peace process" to date.

Before leaving for Washington, however, Mr Netanyahu pointed out that Jerusalem was "not willing to accept the deterioration of security as an existing and natural situation". The words were not just a thinly-coded reminder that resumed bargaining with Syria over the Golan heights was out of the question, and of his opposition to a fully-fledged Palestinian state, with its capital in Jerusalem.

They underline Likud's re-pudiation of the conciliatory policies of previous Labour Prime Ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres - for whose re-election this spring the White

House wished publicly, but in vain.

On that last point, at least both sides will let bygones be bygones. Not only Israel, but also an exceptionally pro-Israel Democratic President in a US election year have a great interest in a smooth working relationship.

Israel's longstanding concern over terrorism, moreover, has suddenly acquired new resonance here, after last month's truck bomb explosion in Dhabra, which killed 19 US servicemen. But the broader divergence is as wide as ever.

At best, Mr Netanyahu is prepared to make modest "confidence-building" gestures, including a promise to meet the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, and an easing of the restrictions on Palestinian workers crossing from the West Bank and Gaza, imposed after the recent spate of suicide bombings in Israel.

But the Administration is happy to be patient, parts of the Jewish community here are not.

A group of 150 rabbis from the Jewish Peace Lobby have written to Mr Clinton demanding that the \$1.2 billion annual economic aid Israel receives from the US be suspended if Mr Netanyahu carries out his campaign promise to expand West Bank settlements. Now was "not the time for a wait-and-see policy", the letter said.

But the Prime Minister was sure of a warmer welcome from AIPAC, the powerful pro-Israel lobby, and on Capitol Hill where he will today address a Congress controlled by Republicans instinctively more sympathetic to his hardline approach to national security.



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international



Call for orders: Admiral Leighton Smith, peace commander

Photograph: Reuter

Lamm beats Perot to join the race for President

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

Ross Perot's fledgling Reform Party yesterday acquired a first declared contender for its 1996 presidential nomination, in the person of Richard Lamm, former Governor of Colorado and outspoken proponent of a balanced budget, electoral reform and strict curbs on immigration.

Announcing his candidacy at Denver University, Mr Lamm said that America needed a "crusade of renewal" which would engage the "main stream middle, addressing long term realities rather than short term sideshows", aimed at eliminating the country's trade and budget deficits and overhauling its "dysfunctional" political system.

Sounding uncannily like Paul Tsongas, the austere former Massachusetts Senator who challenged for the Democratic nomination in 1992, the 60-year-old Mr Lamm – a one time Democrat – declared that 1996 was a "watershed election" whose issue was "not what America wants, but what it can afford". Neither Republicans nor Democrats wanted to deal with the most pressing issues, such as cuts in the health care and social security programmes, for fear of offending voters.

The main practical effect of Mr Lamm's decision will be to force Mr Perot, who has been uncharacteristically quiet of late, to make up his mind about a second White House bid. The quirky Texan billionaire has thus far confined himself to asserting he wants the strongest possible candidate.

Most commentators believe that ultimately the Texas billionaire will conclude that perhaps himself. Perot spokesman yesterday politely welcomed Mr Lamm's move, but stopped well short of any endorsement of his candidacy.

A crucial factor is money. Mr Perot, who is believed to have already spent \$100m on the new party, could finance a campaign out of his own pocket. Not



Richard Lamm: First independent to declare

ley Forge, Pennsylvania. Voting will take place by post and electronically among registered Reform supporters, of whom 1.3 million have either signed ballot petitions or formally joined the party.

Already it is on the ballot in 17 states, and expects to be in the frame in all 50 when the autumn campaign begins on Labor Day, September 2.

But its prospects thereafter are cloudy. Mr Lamm has minimal name recognition but a strong message which could appeal to voters dismayed by a straight choice between President Clinton and Bob Dole.

Mr Perot by contrast is universally known – but, polls suggest, far less popular than four years ago when he ran as an independent. In a three-way contest, he scores no higher than 10 or 12 per cent.

Falling stars fail in French court bids

MARY DEJEVSKY
Paris

Two former whizzkids of French politics – the showman of the centre-left, Bernard Tapie, and one of the country's youngest-ever ministers, the Gaullist Alain Carignon – came to grief in the courts yesterday, losing appeals that offered their last hope of political survival.

The two cases originated in the last corruption clampdown, initiated by the Socialist prime minister, Pierre Bérégovoy, and continued by his Gaullist successor, Edouard Balladur. As both concern politicians who have been largely disowned by their parties, the verdicts carry little political weight. They were, however, severe.

Alain Carignon, who was

briefly environment and communications minister in Mr Balladur's government, had his earlier conviction for corruption upheld and his sentence increased to four years' imprisonment, with one further year suspended. The original term had been three years in prison, with two further years suspended.

Bernard Tapie, who was urban affairs minister in the last two Socialist governments, had his appeal against being made bankrupt summarily dismissed. Bankruptcy brings automatic disqualification from political office. With the appeal pending, Mr Tapie could keep his seat. Now, although he remains a Euro-MP and says he will appeal to the European Court, his days as a French MP

Bosnian war crimes: Nato commander is just waiting for an arrest warrant The man who wants Karadzic

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY
Defence Correspondent

The commander of the peace implementation force in Bosnia said yesterday he was awaiting orders from Nato to arrest Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladić, adding that in his view they should be detained.

International arrest warrants for the pair are expected to be ordered in court at The Hague tomorrow.

The commander, Admiral Leighton Smith, said that until he receives specific orders from Nato's North Atlantic Council, his troops are under orders only to arrest war criminals if they chance upon them.

He also said he hoped there would be more pressure on Serbian President Slobodan Milošević to hand over indicted war criminals, as he had agreed to do when he signed the Dayton Accord.

Admiral Leighton Smith, who has led the 52,000-strong peace implementation force



Still in control: Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladić

since it entered Bosnia in December and who leaves Bosnia at the end of the month, said Mladić is in complete control of his army.

"We do not deal with him," he continued.

"I have received several letters from Mladić. I do not answer those letters. I have received an invitation to lunch with Karadzic, which I did not answer. Karadzic is still in Pale."

He still exercises considerable influence."

He has increased peace patrols in Pale, but said: "That does not mean I've established a permanent presence there."

He said that if Mr Karadzic or Mr Mladić turned up when he was negotiating with the Bosnian Serbs on their territory, he would have to walk out as his personal protection squad would probably not be strong

enough to overpower their men. He also said President Milošević of Serbia bore some responsibility for not handing Mladić and Karadzic over when it was obvious he could have exerted pressure on the Bosnian Serbs, adding that he hoped political and economic pressure would be brought to bear.

"I know there's a hell of a lot of heat being applied to get the parties to do what they've signed up to," he said.

"Milosevic signed – he hasn't implemented."

He said the other indicted war criminals – there are currently 72 – deserved as much attention as the two Bosnian Serb leaders.

The Admiral, who will retire when he leaves Bosnia, said he was "absolutely delighted" with what had happened in his six months as commander of the peace force.

"Initially not many, including myself, thought we would be this far along in the peace process without a great

many more problems than we have had," he said.

Admiral Smith remained optimistic that Bosnia would not remain split into two completely separate entities, though many observers disagreed.

He said 30,000 vehicles had crossed the "inter-ethnic boundary line" between the Serb and Muslim-Croat segments in the last few months and that he had recently seen 75 cars crossing the line to attend a market on the other side.

"Is it a multi-ethnic state now?" he asked, rhetorically. "No. Can we expect one by December? Probably not."

He said the elections due in December would be "a huge event" but would mark only the beginning of a return to normality in the country.

He said that establishing the authority of elected officials would be difficult in itself, and he therefore doubted whether the climate would be stable enough to withdraw all military forces after 20 December.

THE BATTLE OF GLORIOUS VICTORY?

THE BATTLE OF
GLORIOUS VICTORY?

On the 22nd May 1982, five hundred men of the 2nd Parachute Regiment took on a superior Argentine force at Goose Green, and won the first land battle of the Falklands War.

The Para's Commanding Officer, Lt/Col H Jones was killed charging an Argentine trench and was awarded

the Victoria Cross. "The devastating display of courage," said the citation "completely undermined their will to fight further."

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New clashes in Chechnya mar Yeltsin's return

TONY BARBER
MOSCOW

President Boris Yeltsin yesterday appointed a new head of Russia's domestic intelligence service and discussed the make-up of his next government, but a breakdown of the truce in Chechnya dashed his hopes of a smooth start to his second term in office.

In the worst fighting since the ceasefire was agreed on 10 June, only days before the first round of Russia's presidential election, six Russian soldiers were reported killed in a battle with rebels near Gekhi in south-western Chechnya.

The deputy commander of Russian troops, General Vladim

imir Shamanov, said the operation to smash a rebel force entrenched in Gekhi had involved the use of aircraft, artillery and interior ministry troops. Tensions were heightened by a rebel threat to execute Russian prisoners if civilians came under attack, and by an army warning to the rebels to release all captives or face being wiped out.

Under the terms of last month's truce, which appeared to be timed to assist Mr Yeltsin's chances of re-election, the Russian army is due to leave Chechnya by September in return for the demilitarisation of the rebels. But rebel commanders said the latest clashes put the truce in danger of collapse.

They accused the Russian forces of launching 52 attacks on Chechen settlements since Monday evening, killing five people and wounding 18. About 30,000 people are believed to have been killed in Chechnya since Russian forces intervened in December 1994 to crush a drive for independence.

Unseen in public for two weeks but apparently still very much in control of Russia's fortunes, Mr Yeltsin issued a decree that named Nikolai Kovalyov, 47, as the chief of the Federal Security Service (FSB), the successor to the internal affairs wing of the former KGB.

Mr Kovalyov, a career KGB officer, became deputy head of the service in 1994 and was its acting chief after the dismissal on 20 June of Mikhail Baryshnikov.

Mr Kovalyov has virtually no public profile but is officially said to have spent two years in Afghanistan, though it is unclear in what capacity. His previous duties also include responsibility for economic counter-intelligence – experience that may appeal to the new national security supremo, Alexander Lebed, who has promised a crackdown on crime and corruption. Mr Lebed conferred privately on Monday with Mr

Yeltsin and the Prime Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, but there is no firm evidence he had a hand in Mr Kovalyov's appointment. However, he said publicly on Saturday that the appointments of the "power ministers" – those in charge of defence, interior and security affairs – should be co-ordinated with him.

Mr Chernomyrdin, who has made clear his view that Mr Lebed should restrain his undisguised ambitions for power, met Mr Yeltsin yesterday to discuss

Nikolai Kovalyov: New chief of Federal Security Service

cuss the formation of the next government. The main interest centres on how reformist a complexion the government will have in the light of Mr Yeltsin's crushing election victory last week over the Communist candidate, Gennady Zyuganov.

Mr Chernomyrdin, a moderate reformist who is certain to retain the premiership, held talks yesterday with Russia's leading liberal opposition politician, Grigory Yavlinsky, who was knocked out in the election's first round. Mr Yavlinsky has signalled his readiness to accept the post of first deputy prime minister in charge of the economy, but officials close to Mr Chernomyrdin said it was unlikely that he or any of his liberal colleagues in parliament would be offered government jobs.

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

The spectacular pictures of laser-guided bombs falling down air vents in the Gulf war were highly misleading and the weapons were not nearly as effective as claimed, says a classified report by the United States General Accounting Office to be released tomorrow.

The report on air operations in Desert Storm says the post-war claims about the precision-guided weapons were "misleading, inconsistent with the best available data, or unverifiable", and that this was especially evident with the most sophisticated weapons such as the Tomahawk cruise missile and the F-117, a Stealth fighter.

Based on interviews with more than 100 pilots who flew in the war, the report concludes that the high-altitude bombing tactics used by the US meant loss of accuracy, even with supposedly high-precision weapons, and inferior less sophisticated aircraft may have offered better value for money. *Christopher Bellamy – London*

The reputed godfather of Russian organised crime in the United States was found guilty yesterday of attempting to extort \$3.5m (£2.3m) from a Wall Street investment firm. Vyacheslav Ivankov, 56, believed to be the leader of the Russian mafia in the US, was convicted in a district court in Brooklyn. Also convicted of conspiracy to commit extortion and attempted extortion from a firm run by two Russian businessmen were Sergei Ligner, 33, and Valery Novak, 46. All three face up to 40 years in prison and substantial fines. *New York – Reuter*

Drug charges have been filed in Los Angeles against David Gahan, the lead singer of the pop group Depeche Mode. The Los Angeles District Attorney's office said that Gahan, who was arrested on 28 May at a Hollywood hotel after apparently suffering an overdose, was scheduled to be arraigned on Monday. He was freed on \$10,000 (£6,500) bail after being released from hospital. Deputy District Attorney David Longo said the 34-year-old singer would be formally charged with one count each of possession of cocaine and being under the influence of cocaine. *Los Angeles – Reuter*

Police have broken up a child-stealing gang in southern China, rescuing 16 boys intended for sale. The boys, aged 1 to 5, were among 21 children abducted since last July in Guizhou province for sale in Fujian, the *Xinhua Evening News* of Shanghai reported. It did not say who the intended buyers were, but children are often kidnapped in China for sale as servants or beggars, or to childless couples who want sons. Sixteen gang members were arrested, the newspaper said. *Peking – AP*

AJapanese destroyer will visit Vladivostok in Russia's Far East later this month, the first Japanese warship to call at a Russian port in more than 70 years, the Japanese navy said. The 5,200-tonne destroyer *Kurama* will visit Russia's main naval base in the Far East from 26-29 July to take part in events marking the 300th anniversary of the birth of the Russian navy, said Admiral Kazuya Natsukawa, the chief of staff of Japan's maritime self-defence force. *Tokyo – Reuter*

Zimbabwe's vacancy for the job of hangman has prompted numerous foreign applications, the Justice Minister, Emmerson Mnangagwa, said. Only a few Zimbabweans had applied since the last hangman died in March, and applications have come from as far afield as Germany and Malaysia, he said, since the government had confirmed the death penalty for "four or five" convicted murderers, and a further 31 cases were under review. "There is even more need for a hangman right now," he said, adding that all applications for the job would be considered on merit. *Harare – AP*



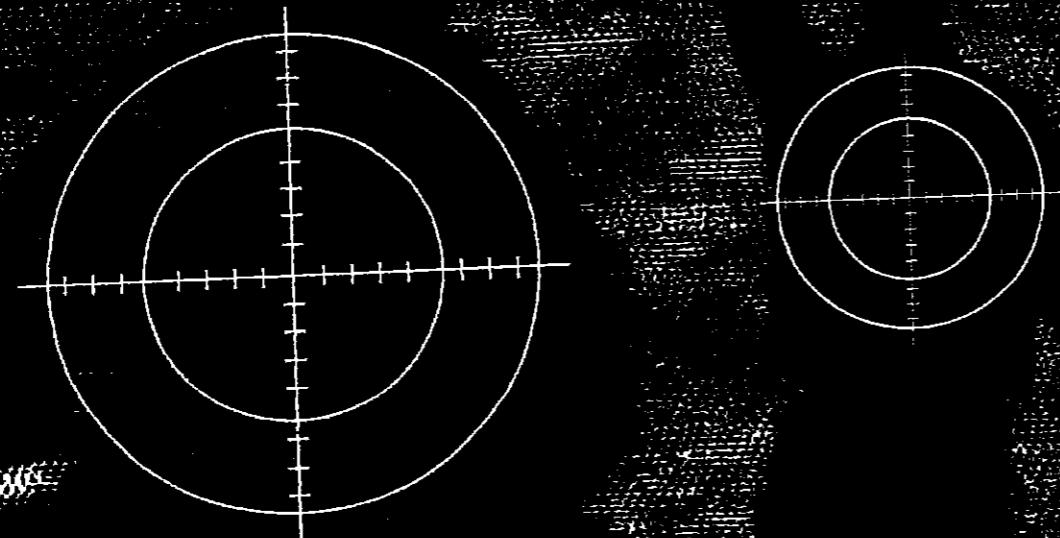
Hurricane watch: A house in Loiza collapsing under a battering by falling trees and 80mph winds as Bertha, the first Atlantic hurricane of the sea-

son, raked north-east Puerto Rico in the Caribbean. Bertha, which has killed four people, yesterday picked up speed to 115mph and was

heading for the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and the Turks and Caicos Islands

Photograph: El Nuevo Dia/Reuters

GOOSE GREEN NEEDLESS SACRIFICE?



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Ernest Armstrong

In May 1963, the Labour Party held one of its 34 conferences on education - "two-way-traffic-in-ideas", they were called - in Sunderland. The conference covering Weirside stood out in the mind of the then Shadow Secretary of State, Richard Crossman, on account of the powerful and sustained contribution of the chairman of the Sunderland Education Authority, Ernest Armstrong. He told the party not to be "examination daft". He warned of over-specialisation in schools - education was about the whole of life.

Armstrong represented mainstream thought across the north of England: Crossman predicted that when he came to Westminster - he was heir apparent to the North-west Durham seat of Will Ainsley - he would be a force in the party's educational thinking. And so it proved. Armstrong defied the rule of thumb that local-government heavyweights seldom make effective MPs.

In my opinion, Armstrong's most important, if unheralded, political achievement was the considerable influence he had on the thinking of his friend Anthony Crosland (Secretary of State for Education and Science from January 1965 until August 1967) and the creative senior civil servant Tony Weaver, who together devised the binary system and promoted the concept of comprehensive education.

Armstrong never apologised for comprehensive education. He may have seemed to be on the right of the Labour Party, but no one did more to champion the cause of equality of opportunity for all children in Britain. As chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party backbench education committee at the time, I know how much the glittering Oxford intellectual and author valued the judgements of the primary-school headmaster from County

Durham. For his part, Armstrong told me that whenever he felt despondent about the Labour Party he would turn for solace to Crosland's *magnum opus*, *The Future of Socialism*. Though he added with a chuckle: "I often had to tell Tony that good sense in education policy began when you got north of Darlington!"

Ernest Armstrong was the youngest of nine children of a miner, Councillor John Armstrong of Durham County Council. His maternal grandfather was a boiler-maker in the Sunderland shipyard making the world-famous Doxford engines, and throughout his life Armstrong championed the interests of the skilled engineering craftsman.

He did not go to university in the 1930s but to Leeds Teacher Training College, in the knowledge that some of his elder siblings could have had a further education had his parents been able to afford it; as the youngest he was the lucky one. Perhaps it was from this knowledge that his compelling sense of duty to others stemmed.

Within months of qualifying as a schoolteacher Armstrong joined the RAF and was posted to Egypt in support of the 8th Army. He once told me that as a young man he had been appalled by the way so many British servicemen treated the Egyptians as "wogs". For a devout Christian brought up on the dignity of man this was a terrible lesson and later on spurred Armstrong to take a deep interest in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, which he served for many years in the belief that it promoted fellowship between peoples of different races.

He was also very active in the United Nations Association; having taken part in a tough Italian campaign in 1944-45 he shared the horror of war common among MPs who had actually experienced fighting.

On his return he went to teach at Simpson Street Primary School in Sunderland. In 1953 he was promoted as head-teacher of New Salmon Primary School. This brought him into contact with the local MP, Mervyn Shinwell (who was also my predecessor as MP for Linlithgow). Ernest Armstrong would describe late at night how he used to do one meeting at an election and then another another and then they would change pupils. One of us, he laughed, would stick to Labour Party policy and the other wouldn't. Guess who was the loyalist.

In 1956 he was given the head-teachership of a bigger primary school, Unsworth Colliery in Washington, where it became a new town. This meant he could have a local government career on the Sunderland Council, which he also joined in 1956, while at the same time acting as headmaster in another authority.

After contesting the seat of Sunderland South in 1955 and 1959 (which he lost to Paul Williams, the Conservative right-winger), Armstrong finally arrived in Westminster as MP for North-west Durham. In his maiden speech on 5 No-

ember 1964, Armstrong encapsulated his view that Nothing has less productive potential than a closed pit. In our area there are men in the prime of life about 45 years of age [Armstrong was 49 when he first became an MP] redundant with no hope of employment. In the proposals for the North East four categories are assigned to various districts and areas. In this country we seem to have a mania for labels. We label our boys and girls. We begin to label some of them even in the infants' school. We label our villages and areas.

Armstrong

favoured the treatment of individuals as humans and towns and villages for what they were. Soon Tony Greenwood appointed him as

his Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS), and when Greenwood left the government Armstrong became Merlin Rees's PPS, joining the whips' office as northern whip in 1967.

My colleagues from the north of England at the time spoke of his understanding and humanity during the difficulties of the Labour government, and took the view that Ernest Armstrong was so nice they didn't like to cause him pain by failing to vote for the government.

When Labour returned to power in 1974, Armstrong went as a junior minister to Education and said many times from the despatch box:

What is taught in school, the methods we use to teach and the way we organise education, depend very much on, and indeed reflect, our view of society and the individual child growing up in that society. Staff, parents and pupils have a vital part to play.

However, truth to tell, he was less than happy under the Secretary of State Reg Prentice and was excited by the prospect of changing to his other love, the Department of the Environment, where the Secretary of State was then Tony Crosland, and where he was to remain under Peter Shore from 1975 to 1979.

On 13 May 1977 he said from the despatch box during the Council Tenants' Charter Bill:

For a number of years I was a member of the local housing authority. The predominant theme at every meeting, apart from assessing the needs of various applicants, was to get the greatest number of units of accommodation, as they are described in circulars from the department. It was the numbers game, so to speak; in those days we thought that when we had a certain number of houses most of the problems were solved.

Great progress has been made in providing the number of houses. But now we realise that only by bringing housing management, the rights of tenants, involvement and participation and a sense of personal responsibility to each individual

householder shall we begin to provide for everybody the most important social mobility. Stable family relationships are the basis of a good society. To have stable relationships we need adequate housing for every family.

Armstrong was a practising Methodist, becoming Vice-Chairman of the Methodist Conference in 1974-75. Although he didn't share the view held by some of his colleagues that there was an underlying religious revival afoot, he believed passionately that people wanted moral values reiterated. People, especially youngsters, he felt, needed guidelines and leadership at a local level.

For such reasons he decided to second Tim Sainsbury's Private Member's Indecent Displays (Control) Bill (1980-81). Although against censorship, Armstrong felt that the pendulum had swung too far.

In 1981 he was appointed Deputy Speaker, and his sympathetic attention was an encouragement to anybody trying to make a constructive speech. Viscount Tonypandy, then the Speaker, George Thomas, described him as "a man whose reliability was as solid as Durham Cathedral". The present Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, at the time a member of the Speaker's Panel, said that Armstrong was "a fine parliamentarian who

actually served the folk he represented at Westminster. His warm Northern accent remained a distinctive feature throughout his career, during which he performed good service as a Labour back-bencher, as a minister and as Deputy Speaker. He helped to steer my early parliamentary career."

Derek Foster, today MP for Bishop Auckland, remembers Armstrong as "a tremendous footballer in the Northern League, and we all thought he was an excellent referee" - a good training for the Speaker's chair.

For his part Armstrong told

me that he liked Clem Attlee's observation to a colleague passing through the Commons' library on his way to the Table Office with a question he was sure would confound the minister. He showed the question to his leader, expecting approval. Attlee read the question and threw it across the table with the words "it will serve no useful purpose."

Armstrong was contemptuous of cheap one-upmanship. He liked members to speak from personal experience about real people; this for him had much greater impact than analytical impersonal treatises however well researched. He thought rightly that the House of Commons resented being lectured. He was forever constructive himself and a believer in constructive compromise.

He used to command the reply attributed to Lloyd George when he received a despatch from a group of purist "Liberal MPs". LG was being accused of running away from Liberal principles and compromise too much. He said to them: "You must make up your minds. Do you want to go to heaven or come to Westminster?" Ernie Armstrong pleaded with his colleagues to live in the real world.

Tom Dalyell

Ernest Armstrong, schoolmaster and politician: born Stanley, County Durham 12 January 1915; Chairman, Sunderland Education Committee 1960-65; MP (Labour) for North-west Durham 1964-87; Assistant Government Whip 1967-69; Lord Commissioner, HM Treasury 1969-70; Opposition Whip 1970-73; Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Education and Science 1974-75; Department of the Environment 1975-79; PC 1979; Deputy Speaker 1981-87; married 1941 Hannah Lamb (one son, one daughter); died 8 July 1996.



Armstrong: "as reliable as Durham Cathedral"

Photograph: UPA

Helen Glatz

Helen Glatz's catalogue of composition is extensive and ranges over solo pieces, chamber music and brass ensemble to incidental music for Dartington College of the Arts' Barn Theatre, Shakespeare plays and puppet theatre.

Among her most distinguished works are *A Brass Fanfare*, written for a visit to Dartington of Jennie Lee, Minister for the Arts in 1967; an *Eclogue for Violin and Strings*, first performed in the Great Hall, Dartington in 1993 to celebrate the centenary of its founder, Leonard Elmhirst's birth; *Two Hungarian Folksongs arranged for Flute and Guitar* (1987), written for the former Deputy Principal and Director of Music at Dartington, Jack Dobbs, on his retirement; and some very successful incidental music for *Romeo and Juliet*, written in 1956. One of her last pieces is entitled *Soccer* for solo double bass and traces the flawlessness of a penalty shot.

Born Helen Hunter in 1908 in the border country of Scottish ancestry, she grew up in an environment of intensive music-making, playing piano with her two sisters, piano duet with Margaret her elder sister. Together they would play through the entire *Ring Cycle* in piano duet version. Her formal music studies were with the music scholar and composer, Professor William (Gilles) Whittaker-

Composition, for outstanding contribution to composition, and a travelling scholarship to Hungary in the 1930s, ostensibly to study with Kodály, although she spent more of her time studying with the composer Sándor Végh; he was a great influence on her, as was the rhythmic quality of Hungarian folk music. In Hungary she also met her future husband, Dr Wolf Glatz, a brilliant linguist.

She knew hard times in Hungary and for two years lived in cellars, away from the fighting on the streets, and spent almost another year trying to secure a passage out of the country for her husband.

Together they came to live in south Devon in 1949, where she took a post at St Timotheus' School in Dawlish. She also accepted an invitation to join the staff of Dartington College of Arts in Totnes. There Glatz worked closely with Imogen Holst and later with Nigel Amherst on the preparatory course and with Sir William Glock at the Royal College of Music.

At the RCM in the 1930s she met Imogen Holst, Elizabeth Maconchy, Elisabeth Lutyens, Thea Musgrave and Benjamin Britten. He was known as Edward Britten at the time and some attribute the change in his second forename to the influence of the alliterative Helen Hunter.

Under Vaughan Williams' tutelage and Gordon Jacob's guidance she orchestrated Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, "after" Ravel.

Helen Glatz became the first woman composer to be awarded the RCM Albert Medal for

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The Chancellor bets all on some long shots

How will history judge Kenneth Clarke as a Chancellor of the Exchequer? As a cautious, prudent man who delivered a healthy economy to his Labour successors but lost the Tory party the election? We think not. As the laughing cavalier who threw caution to the wind in pursuit of pre-election tax cuts? Again, probably not. As a wily politician ready to take an optimistic punt on a rather risky situation?

That seems more like it. To the frustration of his colleagues, Mr Clarke has not been a flamboyant or cynical chancellor so far. He resisted pressure from backbenchers for substantial tax cuts last November. He is going to great lengths to play down expectations of tax cuts this autumn. His interest-rate manoeuvres have been relatively orthodox too: when the economy started to grow too fast after the recession in 1994 he raised rates. When growth slowed again he began to nudge rates gently down again.

Understandably, Conservative MPs with modest majorities have not been wildly impressed by this. They see the shadow of Mr Clarke's sometime predecessor, Roy Jenkins, flickering on the Treasury walls. Jenkins had played a prudent game but was widely blamed by his peers for losing Labour the 1970 election by being excessively responsible – a charge he has always denied.

But it is really plausible that Kenneth

Clarke, one of the most consummate politicians in the game, should resist the opportunity to play politics this time? He is a man who loves government and will not give it up lightly. He will not saunter away from the Tories' last hopes for a 1997 victory.

He is a gambler. He is taking a calculated risk with the public finances, with the economy and with public opinion. And like all good gamblers, he is playing with concentration, and to win.

Consider the state of the public purse. Cash has not been flowing into the Treasury this year quite as fast as the cabinet had hoped. In Mr Clarke's summer forecast, he revised his estimate of this year's government borrowing up from £2.2bn to £2.7bn. Next year's borrowing is now expected to be £2.3bn rather than £1.5bn – a big gap. And we have no idea what will happen to borrowing after that.

The tax cuts Mr Clarke and his predecessor Norman Lamont put in place were supposed to remedy once and for all a structural problem in the Government's deficit. But with borrowing still at £2.7bn after five years of growth and billions of pounds of tax increases, it seems they were not successful.

We should be grateful, perhaps, that Mr Clarke is not yet advocating tax cuts for this year, too. To cut taxes further right now would be economically crazy. But we shall have to wait, sceptically, and see: the

Treasury may well have built room for income tax cuts into these forecasts.

The Chancellor is betting the public purse on the chance that the shortfall in revenue will vanish of its own accord. And he is betting his political future on the hope that the public and the markets accept his optimistic projections about the course of borrowing in future. Both seem long shots to us.

But they are not his only gambles this year. He is taking a punt on the economy, too. With tax cuts a difficult option, he is counting on some kind of economic feel-good factor boosting Conservative support. And he will be

reluctant to do anything like raising interest rates, which might quell that pleasurable warmth on the high street – whatever the economists advise.

As the Chancellor pointed out yesterday, everyone agrees that the economy will accelerate later this year. Firms seem to have stopped running down their stocks and are producing new goods. As European economies start to grow, exports should pick up again as well.

More important for him, consumption is growing strongly. We are all set for consumer-led growth. It is nothing like the investment-led or export-led growth that might have been more sus-

tainable. If long-standing weaknesses in the British economy – including skills shortages and low investment – prevent us from producing enough goods and services to satisfy rising consumer demand then we will have inflation back yet again – a poor reward for the bad times past.

Mr Clarke says that the British economy can grow at 3 per cent a year for some time without inflationary pressures building. Really? He may be right but economists at the Bank of England are not the only ones to be worried about inflation taking off in a couple of years' time.

From the Conservatives' point of view, one might say – so what? In a few years' time, surely the successfully re-elected Chancellor Clarke can sort out inflation just as he did with growth? It is not as simple as that – as the wrecked reputations of so many previous chancellors demonstrate. Interest-rate changes take up to two years to have their full effect. If you want to start limiting inflation in two years' time you have to start raising interest rates right now. But can one really imagine a politician raising mortgage rates today to solve a post-election problem that voters won't perceive for several years?

The Scottish money man who observed that democracy and low inflation may be incompatible had a point.

If Mr Clarke's political bets pay off, he will sail into the election with a

booming economy, some judicious tax cuts and a public that has chosen to forget about the longer-term risks. History would then judge him a fine politician. If his economic bets pay off, we will judge him a very lucky chancellor. If, on the other hand, the public choose not to give the Government the credit for recovery and choose not to believe promises of tax cuts, then it will be Gordon Brown, not Mr Clarke, who has to pick up the pieces of a fiscal crisis and an overheated economy.

Defence against the Englanders

Hadrian's Wall, as our heritage protection. One reason is the embarrassment it causes Little Englanders. Sketchy on the facts of history, they celebrate the wall as a structure to keep out the Scots – who did not exist as such when it was built. But they are also passionately hostile to European unity, leaving them with this problem: Hadrian was Italian, and the wall was intended to protect the Pax Romana. It was, you might say, one of the first Euro-projects. It is such a symbol of European union, it should have been used yesterday to celebrate the 80th birthday of the venerable Ted Heath.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Why we need the Church of England

Sir: Your leading article "Church and State would be better off divorced" (5 July) would have been more persuasive and responsible, had it attempted to argue for what it asserted.

First, though, may I suggest that the *Independent* is not the best judge of what is in the best interests of the Church? A majority of church people believe that the Church of England would be a more prophetic religious organisation with greater integrity if all formal links with the state were ended; but the most recent test of opinion in the General Synod saw a large majority rejecting moves to challenge even the most controversial elements of Establishment. The majority view remains that the Established status of the Church gives us distinctive opportunities to engage with and serve the wider society at different levels in the name of Christ.

Now do I find more convincing your arguments that the state would be better off without an Established Church. You do not seem aware that there are other forms of Establishment, as in the case of the Church of Scotland, which do not involve a link with the monarchy and Parliament as in England; so you fail to consider options for reform, rather than outright disestablishment.

You produce some dubious negative arguments about the current situation. For example, you say that the Prince of Wales has made it clear that he is not keen on becoming Supreme Governor of the Church of England, which is untrue; and that the presence of the Established Christian Church "implies that there are no moralities other than the Christian", which is not at all the line taken by the Archbishop of Canterbury last Friday.

But your greatest failure is that you put forward no single positive reason as to why disestablishment would make the country a better place. It is as if "full" political reform (whatever that is) is an absolute good in its own right. But to what end? Why would debates in Parliament be better without the contribution of bishops? Why would most people be happier if the Christian faith were stripped out of our national symbols and institutions? And who would gain if the Church of England withdrew from its commitment to minister to every parishioner, whether devout church-goer or not?

English people know that the Church of England is there for them whenever they need it. They can opt out, but they do not need to opt in. Why would this be a better country if the Church of England had no greater responsibility than our other churches?

I am sure that the Church of England would not want to stand in the way of any broad-based consensus, properly informed and carefully argued, in favour of fundamental constitutional change. I suspect, however, that such a consensus is highly unlikely to coalesce around any proposition that destroying the public recognition of spiritual aspirations, currently expressed in the Established status of the Church, is somehow a self-evident good.

MICHAEL WINTON
The Bishop of Winchester
Wolvesey, Winchester

Sir: As a Methodist, who believes strongly in the freedom of the



Tory pursuit of the car economy

Sir: John Gummer really must be a beefburger short of a picnic if he believes that the current Tory government has a "strong environmental record" and that many of the problems are because opposition pressure is lacking (Letters, 5 July).

In the last 17 years we have seen ideologically driven road building in this country on a scale previously unheard of. swathes of unreplaceable countryside have been concreted, and ecosystems destroyed, to pursue the Thatcherite myth of the Great Car Economy. It is now a commonplace that building roads does not ease transport problems but can actually create more traffic, congestion and pollution.

The Conservatives recently announced another £100m to widen one tiny part of the M25 which, by their own calculations, will be back to current levels of congestion within 10 years. That money could have paid for 100 bus stations, more than 1,000 state of the art clean and green buses or 5,000 kilometres of bus priority and cycle lanes.

The Government has published a report on the effects of climate change, yet their extra roads and traffic policies have added to CO₂ emissions and global warming.

The Labour Party is committed to developing sustainable transport. This means providing all of us with real choices and alternatives to car use – making it

safe for people to cycle and walk our streets, having better quality bus services, and a rail network that puts passengers before profits.

GRAHAM ALLEN MP
(Nottingham North, Lab)
London SW1

Sir: How can John Gummer justify his claim (letter, 5 July) that this government has a "strong environmental record"? It has done very little to promote recycling and reuse. It has failed to protect environmentally important sites of special scientific interest. It has made little genuine effort to discourage excessive car use but instead presided over unprecedented road building.

The Climate Action Network UK (letter, 5 July) calls for the UK to reduce CO₂ by at least 20 per cent of 1990 levels by 2005. We should make a start now, by cancelling the Newbury bypass, the Worcester second bypass, and all the other road-building nonsense that this government has currently in hand.

ROBIN P. CLARKE
Birmingham

Students do listen to each other

Sir: I feel compelled to respond to your article regarding the adequacy of the training of Nightline organisations at various universities (Section Two: "Helplines need a Samaritan", 27 June). While it may be true that several Nightlines could be substantially improved by more

prolonged and greater detailed training, it is ridiculous to suggest that such a service should not be offered to students.

There was no mention of the fact that many Nightlines do have several weekends of intensive training which is approved of by fully trained Samaritans who are invited to attend.

The article also failed to appreciate the value of a listening service run specifically for students by members of their own age group and from the same student environment. There can be little doubt that it is preferable for extensively trained Samaritans to be taking calls from members of the wider community. However, I believe that student volunteers – with proper training – are particularly well suited to be taking calls from their fellow students as they are more likely to be in touch with the worries and hardships encountered in everyday student life.

BOB LAST
Co-ordinator
Birmingham NiteLine
Birmingham University

The value of local councillors

Sir: As the leader of Lambeth's largest political party, I am naturally delighted with your coverage of our efforts to clear up the mess in Lambeth and the activities of the dynamic new chief executive we have appointed ("Meet Heather, Britain's town

hall terminator", 8 July).

By failing to mention elected councillors, however, a totally misleading picture is presented of how local government actually works. Across Britain, some 20,000 councillors volunteer their time to appoint senior officers, decide policies, approve major management decisions, determine tax levels and set (normally cut) budgets.

Lambeth is no exception. It was politicians, aided and abetted by incompetent officers, who created the mess. Now it is politicians, helped by competent officers, who are clearing it up.

COUNCILLOR MIKE TUFFREY
Leader Lambeth Lib Dems
London Borough of Lambeth, London SW2

Mandela heads for Trafalgar Square

Sir: Twenty seven years in prison. The leader of an oppressed people is released and takes the oppressor by the hand and offers to share the power that is now his. Such reconciliation has few if any parallels in political history.

The GLC had the courage to place a bust of Mandela (photo, 9 July) on the South Bank. Smuts stands in Parliament Square. It is time for Mandela's fine head to be brought to Trafalgar Square, close to St Martin-in-the-Fields which kept the anti-apartheid flag flying, close to the Embassy that is now once again the High Commission of the Republic of South Africa.

THE REV CANON PAUL OESTREICHER
Director of the International Ministry
Coventry Cathedral, Coventry

Charitable status of public schools

Sir: What Polly Toynbee describes as "the notorious Eton Question" ("A farewell to arms – of the dotter sort", 8 July) is also the "school round the corner question". Scrapping the charitable status of what she still calls "public schools" would damage the latter far more than the former.

It would drive up the school round the corner's costs, force up its fees, put it beyond the reach of middle-income parents and restrict entry to those in a higher income bracket. It would also make it difficult for the school to award bursaries and scholarships to those needing help with fees.

At present, independent schools with charitable status give away through bursaries and scholarships twice as much as they gain from the financial benefits of charitable status. Prince William's education may not be a "charitable cause," but one boy in five at Eton is helped with his fees.

Mrs Toynbee believes that, if something is not done about the charity laws, the public may lose faith in charitable giving and that this would be a tragedy. Odd, therefore, to want to remove the incentives for charitable giving. Odd, too, that more, not less, is being given to charities, even since the advent of the lottery.

DAVID WOODHEAD

National Director
Independent Schools
Information Service
London SW1

Sir: Polly Toynbee is right to identify the problem of what in the modern world may be defined as "good" as perhaps one of the most challenging questions to emerge from the Report of the Commission on the Future of the Voluntary Sector (8 July). At the same time it would be wrong for any government seeking a definition of "good" to fall into the trap of believing that what the public would wish to support only includes the "cuddly causes".

Over the 54 years of Oxfam's existence we have seen how reports of gross violations of human rights have inspired massive outpourings of public support for humanitarian response – from Biafra in the 1960s, Ethiopia in the 1980s and Rwanda in the 1990s. All these conflicts have resulted in massive public support despite their "uncuddly" nature.

International conventions on human rights exist – but are honoured more in the breach than in the observance. It must be to the "public benefit" to see these conventions upheld. Oxfam would welcome the expansion of charitable status to include organisations that actively promote human rights, one of the principal recommendations of the report.

ED CAIRNS
Policy Adviser, Oxfam UK and Ireland
Oxford

Aged pilot

Sir: "How much is a pilot worth?" (Section Two: front page, 9 July). Although not entitled to the DFC, can sport most of the Second World War campaign medals shown on the left breast of your picture of an airline pilot.

I wonder how old he is? I am 84 and not allowed by my wife to drive a car further than our village street. Are we still in the hands of veteran like me en route to Timbuktu?

BASIL KENTISH

Faring, Essex

14 interview

Why we reject the West – by the Saudi's fiercest Arab critic

Osama Bin Laden is a tall, slim man and when he walks towards me surrounded by his Arab "mujahid" guerrillas in the mountains of Afghanistan, he towers over his companions. Huge insects fly through the night air, settling like burns on his Saudi robes and on the clothes of his men. Bin Laden's narrow eyes and long beard were familiar amid the battlefields of Afghanistan where he and his guerrillas fought the Soviet invasion army of the Eighties. His appearance is little changed, the beard a trifle greyer, perhaps, but the fierceness unquenched. Then he fought the Russians. Now, determined to overthrow the monarchy in Saudi Arabia and oust the Americans from the Kingdom, he is describing the bombings that slaughtered 24 Americans in Riyadh and Khorbar-Dhahran as a symbol of Saudi anger, the presence of US forces as an "insult" to the Saudi people.

For Bin Laden, the betrayal of the Saudi people began 24 years before his birth, when Abdul Aziz al-Saud proclaimed his kingdom in 1932.

"The regime started under the flag of applying Islamic law and under this banner all the people of Saudi Arabia came to help the Saudi family take power," he says as the night wind moves through the darkened trees, rustling the robes of the Arab Afghan fighters around us. "Abdul Aziz did not apply Islamic law; the country was set up for his family. Then after the discovery of petroleum, the Saudi regime found another support – the money to make people rich and give them the services and life they wanted and to make them satisfied."

Bin Laden is picking his teeth with a piece of "miswak" wood, a habit that accompanies many of his conversations. History – or his version of it – is the basis of almost all his remarks. And the pivotal date is 1990, the year Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait.

"When the American troops entered Saudi Arabia, the land of the two holy places [Mecca and Medina], there was a strong protest from the *ulema* [religious authorities] and from

At home in his Afghanistan fastness, Osama Bin Laden tells Robert Fisk why he wants to drive the Americans and British out of the Gulf

students of the *Sharia* law all over the country against the interference of American troops. This big mistake by the Saudi regime of inviting the American troops revealed their deception. They had given their support to nations that were fighting against Muslims. They helped the Yemen Communists against the southern Yemeni Muslims and helping [Yassir] Arafat's regime fight Hamas [who opposed the

reception money since 1992, and those who get grants now receive them on government loans from banks. Education is deteriorating and people have to take their children from government schools and put them in private education which is very expensive."

Bin Laden pauses to say if he has listened to his careful, if frighteningly exclusive history lesson. "The Saudi people have remembered now what the

people understand: the speeches of the *ulemas* in the mosque – that our country has become an American colony. They act decisively with every action to kick the Americans out of Saudi Arabia. What happened in Riyadh and Khorbar [when 24 Americans were killed in two bombings] is clear evidence of the huge anger of Saudi people against America. The Saudis now know their real enemy is America."

Bin Laden spreads his right hand and uses his fingers to list the "mistakes" of the Saudi monarchy. "At the same time, the financial crisis happened inside the Kingdom, and now all the people there suffer from this. Saudi merchants found that their contracts were broken. The government owes them 340 billion Saudi riyals, which is a very big amount; it represents 90 per cent of the national income inside the Kingdom. Prices are going up and people have to pay more for electricity, water and fuel. Saudi farmers have not

peace process in the Middle East. After it insulted and jailed the *ulema* 18 months ago, the Saudi regime lost its legitimacy."

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ulema told them and they realise America is the main reason for their problems.

"The ordinary man knows that his country is the largest oil producer in the world, yet at the same time he is suffering from taxes and bad services. Now the

people understand: the speeches of the *ulemas* in the mosque – that our country has become an American colony. They act decisively with every action to kick the Americans out of Saudi Arabia. What happened in Riyadh and Khorbar [when 24 Americans were killed in two bombings] is clear evidence of the huge anger of Saudi people against America. The Saudis now know their real enemy is America."

There is a dark quality to Bin

Laden's calculations. "If one kilogram of TNT exploded in a country in which nobody had heard an explosion in a hundred years, surely the exploding of 2,500 kilos of TNT at Khorbar is evidence of the people's resistance to American occupation..."

But it was America that captured Bin Laden's anger. "I believe that sooner or later the Americans will leave Saudi Arabia and that the war declared by America against the Saudi people means war against all Muslims everywhere. Resistance against America will spread in many, many places in Muslim countries. Our trusted leaders, the *ulema*, have given us a *fatwa* that we must drive out the Americans. The solution to this crisis is the withdrawal of American troops... their military presence is an insult to the Saudi people."

But did not the Europeans support the *mujahidin*'s war against Muslims? "We were never at any time friends of the Americans," Bin Laden says. "We knew that the Americans support the Jews in Palestine and that they are our enemies. Most of the weapons that came to Afghanistan were paid for by the Saudis on the orders of the Americans because Turki al-Faisal [the head of Saudi external intelligence] and the CIA were working together."

So what kind of Arabian Islamic state does Mr Bin Laden wish to see? Would thieves and murderers still have their heads cut off, for example, in a *Sharia*-governed state? Mr Bin Laden's answer is unsatisfactory. All Muslims would love to live under true *Sharia*, he says. A guilty man would only be happy if he was justly punished. Dissident Mr Bin Laden may be. But moderate, never.

Saudi Arabia's angriest dissident reserves some of his fury for the British. "I am astonished at the British Government," he says. "They sent a letter to me through their embassy in Khartoum before I left Sudan, saying that I would not be welcome in the UK. But I did not ask to go to Britain.

Along with the driver, walked to a shaded patch of grass and began to pray. For minutes, the two men lay half-prone, facing the distant Kabul Gorge and, beyond that, a far more distant Mecca. We drove off along a broken highway and then on to a dirt track by a canal, the guns in the back of the truck bouncing on the floor, the guards eyes peering from behind their chequered scarves. We travelled like that for hours, past half-demolished mud villages, ravines and towering black rocks, a journey across the face of the moon.

Out of the grey heat there loomed the ghosts of a terrible war, of communism's last imperial gasp: the overgrown remnants of Soviet army bases, artillery positions, upended, dust-covered guns and the carcass of a burned-out tank in which no one could have survived.

Amid the furnace of the afternoon, there emerged a whole blitzed town of ancient palisaded fortresses, their mud walls shot through with machine-gun

bullets and shells. Wild, naked children were playing in the ruins. Just the other side of the phantom town, Mohamed's driver took us off the track and began driving across shale and hard rock, the stones spitting beneath our wheels as we skirted miles of fields covered in yellow dust. "This is a gift from the Russians," Mohamed said. "You know why there are no people working this ground? Because the Russians sowed it with thousands of mines."

And so we passed through the dead land. Once, as the white sun was sliding into the mountains, we stopped for the gunmen on the back to pull watermelons from a field. They scampered back to the trucks and cut them up, the juice dripping through their fingers. By dusk, we had reached a series of crammed earthen villages, old men burning charcoal fires by the track, the shadow of women cowed in the Afghan "burqa" standing in the alleyways. There were more guerrillas, all bearded, grinning at Mohamed and the driver. It was



An Egyptian 'mujahid' fighter in Afghanistan leads his tiny daughter

Robert Fisk

The mined land of the mujahedin

Robert Fisk is taken on a perilous journey through blitzed towns and dead fields

JALALABAD: There were three Afghans in the back of the pick-up truck. One held a Kalashnikov rifle, another clutched a grenade-launcher along with six rocket ties tied together with Scotch tape. The third nursed a machine gun on his lap, complete with tripod and a belt of ammunition. "Mr Robert, these are our guards," the driver said quietly, as if it was the most normal thing in the world to set off across the wilds of Afghanistan's Nangarhar province under a white-hot afternoon sun with three bearded guerrillas. A two-way radio hissed and crackled on the shoulder of his companion as another truck-load of Afghan gunmen

along with the driver, walked to a shaded patch of grass and began to pray. For minutes, the two men lay half-prone, facing the distant Kabul Gorge and, beyond that, a far more distant Mecca. We drove off along a broken highway and then on to a dirt track by a canal, the guns in the back of the truck bouncing on the floor, the guards eyes peering from behind their chequered scarves. We travelled like that for hours, past half-demolished mud villages, ravines and towering black rocks, a journey across the face of the moon.

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burning charcoal fires by the track,

the shadow of women cowed in the Afghan

"burqa" standing in the alleyways. There

were more guerrillas, all bearded, grinning

at Mohamed and the driver. It was

night before we stopped, in an orchard

where wooden sofas had been covered

in army blankets piled with belts and

webbing and where armed men

emerged out of the darkness, all in

Afghan clothes and soft woolen flat hats,

some holding rifles, others machine

guns. They were the Arab "mujahedin",

the Arab "Afghans" denounced by

the presidents and kings of half the Arab

world.

They came from Egypt, Algeria,

Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, Kuwait.

Two of them wore spectacles, one said

he was a doctor. A few of them shook

hands in a formal, rather solemn way

and greeted me in Arabic. Mohamed

beckoned me to follow him and we

skirted a small river and jumped across

a stream until, in the insect-filled darkness ahead, we could see a sputtering gas lamp. Beside it sat a tall, bearded man in Saudi robes. Osama Bin Laden

stood up, his two teenage sons, Omar

and Saad, beside him. "Welcome to

Afghanistan," he said.

Out of sight but not necessarily out of mind

Where are they now? Yes, a welcome return for the feature which looks at men or women who were once never out of the headlines and seemed an irreplaceable part of our daily lives, but who now seem to have vanished from the scene. We ask the question: where are they now? And even, in some cases, who were they then?

Tim Heenan

Older readers may remember this likeable young Briton who fought his way through to the final stages of Wimbledon in 1996, and thus became the first Briton to capture the hearts of the nation since the last Briton who had fought his way through to the final stages of Wimbledon and thus captured the hearts of the nation, before being beaten by Todd Martin.

Heenan emigrated to New Zealand, where he took up chicken farming, but he often relaxes in the evening by watching videos of his successes against Pafelnik and Gustavsson, occasionally

jumping out of his chair and shouting "out" or "fault". It is believed that Todd Martin still relaxes in the evening by rewatching his match against Heenan, and that Mal Washington relaxes in the evening by watching his victory against Martin. What Richard Krajicek does in the evening is not known. Practise his serve, probably.

Lord Scott

Author of the once famous *Scott Report*, which was expected to blow British politics sky-high but didn't. Lord Scott has published nothing in the years since, then, but he has been working on a film script of his *Scott Report*, for a big-budget version which goes into production this autumn.

"I'm not going to make the mistake in the film which I made in the *Report*," he is quoted as saying. "In the *Report* I made the mistake of reporting the facts and leaving everyone to draw their own conclusions. Unfortunately, everyone drew their own conclusions.

In the film, I understand,

lawyers to sue at once. It only later emerged that this description came from the blurb on the back of one of Archer's own books and was intended as literary praise.

Not only that, but when a

search was initiated to find

out who had written the

offending lines, it was dis-

covered that the anonymous

blurb was none other than

Jeffrey Archer himself.

Jeffrey Archer

The once-feted novelist Jeffrey Archer has been out of the news for some time, but is about to get embroiled in another lawsuit, I hear.

There has always been a tendency to view Archer as a man who invented his own past, a view which Archer hotly resents, so when he found himself being described as an "incorrigible story-teller and fertile fabricator", he ordered his

lawyers to sue at once. It only

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Jeffrey Archer

Frightened men, beware! Women are set to fight

Can women fight? The Army Board is drawing up new recommendations on women's fighting role. Currently half the posts in the army are denied to women and the board will recommend throwing many of them open. However, there will be no hand-to-hand combat – no "teeth arms" work in army argot. Fighting divisions will not be opened up – yet. But the board saw no reason in principle why women should not join the front line.

If they did let women fight, the actual numbers volunteering for combat would probably be tiny – women only form 5.4 per cent of the army. Already they do far more dangerous tasks than they did 10 years ago.

They have driven trucks, ambulances and run signals right up to the front line in Bosnia and the Gulf. They carry guns, but only for self-defence. Navy women serve on battleships and they fly fighter planes.

So what difference would it make to move women into the army front line? In practical terms, very little, as it is only a minor operational mat-

Society has put women in the military but not in to combat. The Army should break this last taboo

ter. But it was not practical considerations that made the Army Board stay its hand.

Spotting the land mines ahead, the board held back because it believes that British society is not yet ready for the front-line woman soldier. They recognise the symbolic power of the image of a fighting woman.

Women fighting from the air or a battleship may be dangerous, but this is relatively decorous and lady-like. Bayonetting people is not.

The army fears getting ahead of public taste – but is it right? The idea of women commandos and marines appeals to all sorts of tastes (mainly pornographic). But it would also fuel more of that panty-line backlash – the "men have lost their role" brigade. It makes women look dangerous, giving them a frightening new public face.

All this takes me back to the Seventies when I joined the Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC) – not

to fight for Queen and country but as an under-cover investigative reporter for several weeks. It was by far the toughest and nastiest assignment I ever undertook. The newsdesk used to hold their sides and howl with laughter when I phoned in desperately seeking any quicker way the lawyers could get me out. (Yes, I know I was a real war correspondent is worse, but that's one assignment I've not yet had to face. Thankfully, this is the closest I've ever come.)

The army then, as now, demands that its soldiers surrender all autonomy to arbitrary authority, which does not come easily to most people nowadays. If you join the Monies or a numpty at least they don't have military police to keep you in.

It is unsurprising that the army is short of some 4,000 recruits. Perhaps it should make more effort to recruit women – and letting women fight might increase the numbers joining

up. An equal chance to die is the only way the army can indicate publicly that they really do treat women equally.

Soldiering for women is restricted not by what women can do, but by notions of feminine seemliness. Not frightening the men was always the name of the game. Feminism might have been rampaging elsewhere in the early Seventies, but we were taught that women's military role was to swanage like the men.

The NCOs dykes almost to a man, bellowed and yelled at us as we swung out onto the square. In step with our own proud WRAC marching band in leopard skins with euphoniums gleaming in the sun, we

type letters, all to release more men for the front.

There has always been a strange sexual ambivalence about women's role in the army. In some respects women had to be like men – they could not get pregnant – a rule the army has had to pay dearly in compensation to wronged pregnant women forced to quit. Women soldiers did not know what they were supposed to be – real women or real men. Either one was a trap.

In our repulsively tailored green Norman Hartnell uniforms, moulded-felt forage caps and flesh-coloured tights we were supposed to be feminine, despite the hideously polished black lace-ups. And yet within the ranks, the secret message was to swanage like the men.

The NCOs dykes almost to a man, bellowed and yelled at us as we swung out onto the square. In step with our own proud WRAC marching band in leopard skins with euphoniums gleaming in the sun, we

bawled out our stilted regimental songs: "It wasn't the Wrens who won the war. The girls in green were there before. It wasn't the Wrens who were first in bed. The girls in green were way ahead. Inky pinky parlez-vous!"

Now the Queen Elizabeth barracks in Guildford is all bare ruined choirs where once the late WRACs sang. The WRAC was disbanded in 1992 and women were integrated into the rest of the army – their only hope of ultimately gaining full equality.

What became of all those nut-brown, sinewy NCOs who loved life in the all-women barracks? Does anyone now scrub the lino behind the cupboards with brillo pads? What happened to the WRAC's own pop group, The Militaires?

If women soldiers wondered what they were for, the Aldershot squaddies had very definite ideas: the first night we were allowed out into Guildford, they shouted across the

disco floor that WRAC stood for Weekly Ration of Army C***. The women soldiers wanted to be attractive, but they wanted to be lads too, so there was a lot of uneasy brag-gadocio about drinking and sex. There was a perverse and confused kitch about the WRAC: pretending to be men, but feminine too. Tough as the lads, full of boasts about knee-tremblers behind the Aldershot NAAFI, yet tender as goisins serving the men discreetly behind the lines in their ladylike army jobs.

Women in uniform will probably always be subjected to ribald mockery and a casual harassment. Perhaps they will never be taken seriously until they start getting killed. But letting women kill challenges the most fundamental tenets of sexual identity. Even Israel has pulled its women back from the most dangerous zones.

The army is right to realise that giving women bayonets breaks the last taboo – but the army is wrong not to do it now. If they wait until society – the frightened men – are ready for it, it could be a long time.



POLLY TOYNBEE

Ulster's blind 'underdogs'



Blundering Unionist tactics have given Sinn Fein a propaganda opportunity

Northern Ireland is on the brink. But then, Northern Ireland is always on or near the brink. Even after months of nervous peace, in important ways it remains a society living on the edge of a nervous breakdown, a history-drenched province on the brink of the British Union, hanging by its fingers from the edge of a secular, materialist country that no longer understands its own history.

Our familiarity with confrontation in Northern Ireland could easily dull us to the strangeness of the past few days. A community that prides itself on being law-abiding and loyal to the Crown, and which regarded the Royal Ulster Constabulary as its champion, is currently in revolt against the policy and agents of the Crown and, in particular, the RUC.

Dark-suited, church-going Orangemen find themselves being rebuked by people close to Loyalist paramilitaries of inner-city Belfast. In burning cars, blockading airports, stoning police, and accusing the state of depriving them of their culture, the Unionist rebels are behaving and sounding increasingly like... well, like republicans.

Early on in the peace process, Conor Cruise O'Brien predicted that it would break down. He mapped out how the breakdown of order would occur, with staged confrontations, escalating violence and rising demands made upon the British Government. What he did not predict was that these things would be initiated by Unionists, rather than Sinn Fein.

At first sight, the timing seems extraordinary, a gormless Orange mistake. Sinn Fein had been in grave difficulty, shut out of the all-party talks yet with no plausible alternative strat-



Bowlers vs batons: Orangemen confront RUC officers at Drumcree on Sunday

egy. Though the IRA hadn't returned to violence on the streets of Northern Ireland itself, the killing of a Garda in the republic and the bombs in Britain had sapped support in Dublin and America. Gerry Adams' moving impersonation of Gandhi was ceasing to win him media applause.

And now comes this. If Sinn Fein propagandists had been able to write the plot, they couldn't have organised it better. Catholic families scared out of their houses by loyalists, just like in the Sixties, confrontations between Orangemen and the police: Major urged to disown the chief constable of the RUC. Oh, happy day!

Unionists have learned to play the underdog and to use language that is listened to by liberal opinion-formers, to speak of violations of their civil rights and of the threat to their identity. As with republicans, moderate Unionists have become adept at pointing, half-warning, half-threatening, to the gunmen in the shadows.

Whether this does them any good with liberal public opinion remains to be seen. Professor Steve Bruce of Aberdeen University, whose book *The Edge of the Union* is one of the best studies of Unionism, points out that they have a deep public relations

problem: "Ulster Unionists look terribly like the parents of people growing up in the Sixties – bowler hats, dark suits, stuffy, church-going."

The seriousness of their religious convictions is a problem for the British, too: "We don't much like religion and we are not actually too keen on people who take it seriously. Religion in Britain means Derek Nimmo in *All Gats and Gaffs*; it's about being nice to people," says Bruce. But, for Ian Paisley, "His God is a jealous god and his God tells him that the Republic is a conspiracy against the last outpost of the true Gospel." All of which provides a barrier between a certain kind of Unionism and secular Britain that PR will never breach.

Many Unionists would respond that the religious fervour and bigotry of Catholic Ireland is as deep-rooted – just much better hidden. And it is true that republican hardliners learnt the language of modern politics far earlier than the Unionist leadership. Many Unionists still tend to wear their bigotry (quite literally) on their sleeves.

How can we reconcile what seem like two opposing arguments about Unionism – that it is helping Sinn Fein by turning to confrontation? and that it is learning from the republicans?

The answer, I think, is simple and bleak: the Unionists are behaving like losers. Their claim to be an endangered and minority species is only partly PR; it is also deeply felt.

And for good reasons. Professor Bruce says, "One doesn't have to be a Unionist to describe everything since the suspension of Stormont [in 1972] as series of anti-Unionist actions by the Government." That is a political judgement, of course, not a security one. From the early Seventies right through to the ceasefire and the Downing Street Declaration, the British state has spent words, money and the blood of British soldiers to defend the majority in Northern Ireland, while, again and again, putting political pressure on that majority.

Over two decades the Unionists have received a series of propositions about power-sharing, assemblies and compromises which they have been reluctant to hear. Their lack of an alternative political strategy has made them the naysayers, the immovable object of modern Europe.

But this doggedness, this obstinate tenacity, has in turn helped drive them away from the spirit of modern Britain, even while they remain politically part of the UK. The more they

struggle, the weaker they become. They have not had the sophistication to win a political battle with Irish nationalism and British pluralism.

Whenever the political pressure for change grows intense, Unionism turns savagely provocative. It did so after the first attempt to broker a political compromise, the Sunningdale agreement, which was followed by the 1974 Ulster workers' strike. Now, as the political process is quietly insisted on by civil servants and ministers, it seems to be happening again.

At a human level, one can sympathise with the alienation of this community, once so arrogantly dominant, now sliding down. The whole world seems against them. Most of it.

But this overturning of cars and stoning of police is futile. For Unionists, it is particularly dangerous. For the more Unionist militancy, the more anger is directed against the state, the weaker will be British sympathy and Britain's desire to help. Unless Unionism realises that political compromise is something to grasp, not something to fear, it will cut itself off from the modern world and make its eventual defeat inevitable. Unionists, the people on the edge of the Union, can still stone their way out of it.

A big 'Hello' to the boys

You may think it just a frivolous girly pastime, but celebrity trivia traps men too, says Ann Treneman

Real men do read *Hello!* in public. Just ask Adrian Dixon. He's 27 and not afraid to admit to a glance at the great and glamorous. "Besides, everyone else would probably be trying to read it over my shoulder," he says.

This week the Great Gatsby Wedding issue hits the newsstands. If you don't know what that is then you must have been out of the country when Paul Gascoigne and Sheryl Faires tied the knot. It's an exclusive like they used to do them, with a reputed £150,000 changing hands to make it worth the couple's while.

British Airways now stocks *Hello!* in first class and club class, but not for the proles in economy – 60 per cent of its half-million readers are ABC1s.

Launched in the UK in 1988 with Princess Anne on the cover, *Hello!* has become an icon in its own right and copy-cat exclamation points are springing up like stigmata at Easter. Wannabes include *Here!*, *That's Life!* and *OK!*, which last week was running a *Boy* babe and baby exclusive.

But *Hello!* is way out front. It has its own curse (the latest victim is Margot Hemingway, tearful before her death looking too happy to be true) and its own inimitable "news" judge-

ment. Who else would realise that what we really need to know is that Donald and Marla Trump have given their toddler Tiffany a "proper garden", by lifting 30 tons of soil to the top of the Trump Tower in Manhattan? Or that "intelligent" people would find themselves looking at all four photographs of heiress Tamara Beckwith ("the fiancée of actress Sharon Stone's brother") running out of petrol in Knightsbridge.

"We're almost an institution these days. For instance, people talk about a *Hello!*-style wedding," says *Hello!* publishing director Sally Cartwright.

On commuter, reading the *New Scientist*, said: "If it was next to me on the train, I would not be ashamed to read it." What he didn't say was that he couldn't stop himself from picking it up. "There are people who are addicted to light relief," says Ms Cartwright. People seem to view *Hello!* in the same category as chocolate; they speak of it as a luxury."

But it has yet to achieve the ultimate triumph – a cover declaring: "The Queen and Prince Philip invite us into their lovely home to share their sorrows and speak of putting family difficulties behind them." What reader, even of the *Independent*, could resist that?

Good-bye battery



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School walls should come down, not go up

Your child's life is at far greater risk from a careless driver than from a madman, says Christian Wolmar

The ghastly attack at the Wolverhampton school teddy bears' picnic calls for a sober reaction. It is a time for leadership rather than hysteria from such figures as the education secretary Gillian Shepherd, her shadow, David Blunkett, and David Hart (leader of the National Association of Head Teachers). They should pause before calling for massive spending on extra security in schools and instead should have the courage to say that making schools into fortresses is both impossible and undesirable.

The issue of school security is charging up the political agenda so fast that there is a danger of tabloid-inspired legislation such as the ill-thought-out Dangerous Dogs Act. Instead, those responsible for the education of our children must emphasise that schools are, per se, indefensible against the sort of attacks we have seen over the past two years. If a madman wants to enter a school with a flame-thrower in Northern Ireland, or with four hand-

guns and enough bullets to kill all the children in Dunblane primary several times over, then no one can stop him. What would a receptionist, for example, have done when Thomas Hamilton or the Wolverhampton machete man came up to her desk? Stick a lapel badge on him? She would have been killed or injured is the honest answer.

As for much-vaunted high-tech solutions, there was, in fact, very good security at St Luke's school in Wolverhampton, with a high wall backed by CCTV cameras, but the machete man simply vaulted the wall. Schools, with their regular comings and goings of scores of children and their scattering of buildings with lots of entrances surrounded by large playgrounds, will always be a dodgle for intruders to enter. But even if it were possible to create totally secure schools, would it be the type of environment we want for our children? Do we really want our five-year-olds to have to wear ID cards as they trot up the stairs for assembly? The answer has to be no.

Mrs Shepherd should point out that between 1983 and 1993 the number of children killed by strangers each year was between five and seven. Dunblane, of course, will create a horrific blip in the statistics, but the long-term trend is for the number to decrease. Jane Kilpatrick, the deputy

Snow, leading a discussion about the issue on *Newnight*, was completely thrown when Michelle Elliott of KidScape said there were very few child murders and that Dunblane was exceptional. "But, but, there must be a growing problem," he blustered. The journalist in him saw that the story wasn't really there, but he had to keep on pretending it was, even linking the attacks with the murder of a nine-year-old girl on Merseyside.

Indeed, the media has to take much of the responsibility for the misrepresentation of where dangers for children lie. The daily coverage in local and national media of events connected with violence presents a world view to parents and children that is entirely misleading and creates an atmosphere of fear in which the development of our children is stunted. In fact, the greatest risks to children do not come from strangers, but from parents, carers and, most avoidably, roads on which child pedestrians are killed every year.

The biggest dangers are from parents, carers and roads

director of the children's safety charity KidScape, says: "The number of child murders was much greater in the Thirties, Forties and Fifties. The child murder rate has fallen by half since 1973, while adult homicides have gone up 40 per cent."

There are moments when I feel ashamed to be a journalist. There was one on Monday night, when Peter

Clarke upbeat on growth and inflation

But £12bn jump in borrowing target takes City by surprise

DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

Kenneth Clarke yesterday held out to voters the promise of faster growth and lower inflation in the next 18 months, while admitting that the economy had not expanded as quickly as he had predicted so far this year.

The Chancellor also said government borrowing this year and next would be £12bn higher than he estimated in last year's Budget, although it would scrape below the upper limit set by the Maastricht Treaty just in time to qualify for the single currency.

Presenting his new economic forecast yesterday, Mr Clarke insisted that the budget was heading towards balance in the medium term, paving the way for the national debt to fall "in due course". But he added: "This year we face a situation where we are going to have to have tight control on public spending." He would cut taxes only if it could be afforded, he said.

Yet Mr Clarke's new target for the public sector borrowing requirement (PSBR) next financial year is so much higher than before that some City economists speculated that he was penning in a "surprise" tax cut to be announced in November.

Others thought the new forecast still underestimated the scale of the likely shortfall in the Government's finances.

Analysts also said the Chancellor's optimism about inflation paved the way for a further reduction in interest rates.

"He seems to be lining things up to say by the autumn that borrowing is not as bad as we thought, and lining things up for

lower interest rates as well," said Michael Dicks, UK economist at City investment bank Lehman Brothers.

Shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown criticised Mr Clarke for failing to explain why his borrowing plans were "in tatters". Mr Brown said: "The black hole in the public finances shows that his economic management is neither competent nor credible."

And Labour leader Tony Blair clashed with the Prime Minister in the House of Commons. "Isn't the truth that having promised you would cut tax, you raised it, and having promised you would cut borrowing, you raised it?" Mr Blair said, calling the Government's handling of the public finances "untrustworthy and incompetent".

However, Mr Clarke was in ebullient form yesterday. "We have never had a better combination of economic prospects," he said, claiming that he saw little danger of anything going wrong with the economy during the run-up to the General Election.

The new forecast has downgraded the growth expected this year to 2.5 per cent but predicts growth picking up to more than 3 per cent on average during the next 18 months.

Consumer spending, which was revised up in the forecast, drives the predicted expansion with a 4.25 per cent increase in 1997. This would be the fastest spending growth since the late 1980s boom.

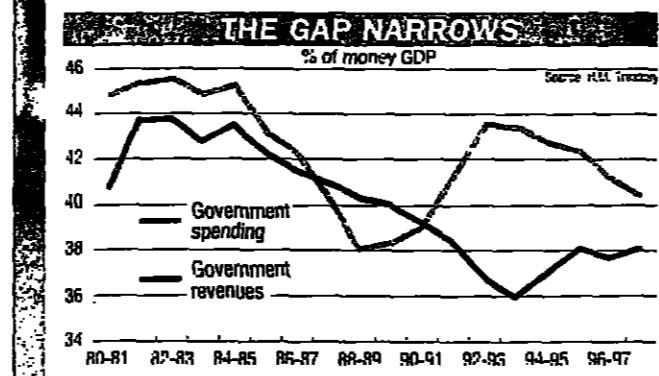
But the Chancellor said a surge in consumer spending did not threaten achievement of the inflation target. One reason for their forecasts of inflation have always been wrong and have always been pessimistic. Yesterday's forecast shows in-

NEW FIGURES FOR OLD

Treasury's summer and budget forecasts compared

	1996		1997	
	Old forecast	New forecast	Old** forecast	New forecast
% change	3.00	2.25	3.25	3.25
GDP				
of which:				
Consumer spending	3.50	3.25	3.75	4.25
Investment	4.25	3.00	3.75	5.50
Government spending	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.75
Exports	7.25	6.00	6.50	5.75
Imports	6.75	7.25	5.50	5.75
Stocks*	-2.5	0.25	-2.5	-2.5
RPI	2.25	2.50	2.25	2.25
PSBR (£bn)	22.40	27.00	15.00	23
Government Exp. (£bn)	30.830	30.810	31.900	32.180
Government revenue (£bn)	28.48	28.04	30.400	29.820

* change as a % of GDP ** First half of 1997



is very subdued indeed," he said.

In a remark that analysis

saw as creating room for a further cut in base rates after his forecast for the PSBR had been revised to £12bn higher than he had predicted.

Consumer spending, which was revised up in the forecast, drives the predicted expansion with a 4.25 per cent increase in 1997. This would be the fastest spending growth since the late 1980s boom.

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Yesterday's forecast shows in-

flation falling below the 2.5 per cent target by the end of this year.

The new Treasury forecast ac-

cepts that its previous fore-

casts for the PSBR had been re-

vised to £12bn higher than he had

predicted.

Managing their VAT liabilities

while the shift towards

part-time work helped explain

weak growth in income tax

revenues.

The Treasury nevertheless

managed to predict that Britain

would just meet the Maastricht

limit of a 3 per cent of GDP

budget deficit next year.

The Government's PSBR

targets are close to the City av-

erage, but the £8bn revision for

next year look many analysts by

surprise. "It is surprising to see

the combination of such a

strong forecast for the econo-

my and so little improvement in

the public finances," said Simon

Briscoe of Nikko Europe.

Adam Cole at broker James

Capel said: "By the November

Budget, the Chancellor could

well be looking at revising the

PSBR forecasts down."

It would be the perfect background to

announcing tax cuts, he said.

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Granada to raise £1bn from hotel sales

MATTHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

Granada Group is confident of raising at least £1bn from the sale of its 17 Forte Exclusive Hotels, the company's chief executive, Charles Allen said yesterday.

He added that would-be buyers, whose initial bids were received last Friday, would be given six to eight weeks to review confidential documents and visit hotels before a final list of five or six bidders was established.

"We expect to have all the sales completed by December," Mr Allen said. "There has been a huge level of interest, and already we have had indications that bidders are prepared to pay a premium for these properties."

He declined to discuss individual amounts for each hotel.

or to confirm the names of potential buyers. Speculation has centred on hotel groups as well as wealthy individuals, such as the reclusive Barclays brothers.

According to documents seen by the *Independent*, the Grosvenor House is expected to raise at least £300m on its own. Granada is forecasting pre-tax profits at the flagship luxury hotel of £33m in 1996/97, compared with about £23m this financial year. Nightly yields are expected to rise to £160 a room from the current £112, under a profit enhancement plan.

The information is contained in the confidential sales memorandum sent out to 70 potential bidders. Granada declined to comment on the details.

The hotels disposal programme is part of Granada's plan to sell off unwanted assets gained when it won its hostile £13.9bn bid for Forte earlier this year. In addition to the Exclusive, which include the Hyde Park Hotel, the Westbury hotels

Government policy on interest rates, an increase in terrorism, a fall in tourism – all of these could affect the profit," said one leading leisure analyst.

Mr Allen said the company was confident of being able to sell all the earmarked assets within the next 18 months, as previously stated. The Savoy stake will probably take the longest to sell, he added, because of the need to work

closely with existing management to find a suitable owner.

He reiterated that a trade buyer was the most likely bidder for the Alpha stake, although he assumed that any deal would be accompanied by a bid for the whole company.

Granada has produced profit enhancement plans for all the

Exclusives, and is working with general managers to increase yields. According to the sales memorandum, the Westbury hotel in New York is forecast to drive profits from about £4m to about £8.2m by 1999, with nightly revenues per room rising to \$191 from \$152. The Hyde Park Hotel is expected to see pre-tax profits rise more modestly, from about £6.9m currently to about £9.4m by 1999.

Granada has also introduced

higher prices and additional

services in its Travelodge budget hotel chain, which the company intends to keep. Mr Allen confirmed yesterday that the higher prices initially pushed occupancy levels down by up to 4 percentage points, although he said these had recovered, even as yields have increased.

It also emerged yesterday

that Granada is in negotiations

with its banks to lower the

financing charges on certain

Forte properties, including the

leaseback arrangements at the

Travelodge hotels.

Insurance companies believe

that unscrupulous salespeople

Many unaware of pension risks

NIC CICUTTI

could mis-sell such schemes to people who want higher payments immediately when they retire, without advising them of the dangers.

The Association of British Insurers, the industry's trade body, is so concerned that it is lobbying the Government to change the law.

One insurance executive, who would not be named, said: "What worries me is that while most of us will be scrupulous, it only takes a few to create mayhem. Even 1 per cent of mis-sold policies could lead tens of thousands of cases over the years. Unless we act now, we could be talking several times that number."

A clause in the Pensions Act, introduced last year, forces insurance companies to offer a special type of option, called income withdrawal or deferred annuity purchase, to all those with a "rebate-only" pension who are about to retire. In return for giving up an immediate right to a guaranteed, but lower, annual income they can draw down larger payments until the age of 75.

If the larger payments are drawn down until that age and investment performance is poor, pensioners would only be left a small pot of capital to buy an annuity to top-up the basic state pension.

If investment performance is poor, however, the value of the fund could shrink at the time when people need it most.

In another statement, the cable customer asked how the BT tele-marketer had got the phone number. The individuals claim to have been told that the cable company had provided it, but that it was for emergency services only. "I've never been on BT," the customer claims to have said. "The operator then answered cable."

In a third case, a cable customer contacted directly by the *Independent* that she had been called by BT and asked to consider switching back. She said last night that the BT employee had addressed her by her last name.

When asked how BT had got the ex-directory number, she said the tele-marketer responded: "I don't know how they got it. It was just given to me."

A BT spokesman said last night: "We have not had any case where an individual is an ex-directory customer who has been addressed by name," but added that he would not talk about individual cases. "We simply can't keep taking these darts of innuendo and scuttlebutt" from the cable industry, he said.

More than 50,000 customers a month have been deserting BT in favour of services offered by cable companies. Competition in the industry has intensified strongly in the last month as large cable companies have cut prices sharply.

Penetration rates achieved by cable companies in some areas have been as high as 60 per cent, posing a big threat to BT's core business.

Under a new-style deferred



COMMENT

If Mr Clarke entertains serious hopes of still being Chancellor after the election, he should be trying to solve the borrowing problem the next Government will inherit.

Conjuring trick leaves a tax cut on the cards

It is only natural that as the general election draws closer the smoke obscuring the public finances should get denser, the mirrors more distorting. The achievement of yesterday's summer forecast was simultaneously to increase the PSBR figures to more realistic levels, keep people guessing about whether there would nevertheless be tax cuts in the Budget, and predict that Britain will still be able to satisfy the Maastricht requirement that borrowing should be less than 3 per cent of GDP by 1997. So there you are. Magic. The Treasury officials who conjured up this one deserve to be put on one of those new fangled, Gorbunny approved, long term performance related bonus schemes.

The Maastricht trick relies on the fact that the deficit that counts for membership of the single currency is a slightly different definition to the PSBR. It excludes privatisation proceeds but includes a variety of other transactions such as debt write-offs for public corporations and cash-flow delays. The upshot is that though it has been higher than the PSBR for the past 15 years, it will be lower in 1997/98. Nothing suspicious in this, the Treasury insists, just a fact of life. Jolly handy one, though.

But enough of Maastricht, Europe is borrowing. What we really want to know is whether the condition of the Government's finances allow Kenneth Clarke to deliver tax cuts. Borrowing may well turn out to be even higher than the Chancellor's new forecasts.

This would firmly close the door on any tax cutting if the Chancellor is serious about getting the budget to balance by the end of the century.

On the other hand, given that the Treasury prediction for the PSBR this year and next is now similar to what independent economists expect, Mr Clarke may be able to get away with what he did in the last Budget. It may be possible to find £2.3bn for lower taxes by trimming expenditure a bit here and cutting the contingency reserve there without entirely sacrificing his credibility as a Chancellor who is tough on borrowing. His claim that borrowing is on a downward path will still be true, as will his forecast of a balanced budget in the medium term. As at the time of the last budget, however, at the "medium term" becomes a year later.

The chances are that the information available about revenues and spending by November will leave the latter option open to Mr Clarke. But if he is sincere about the need to reduce borrowing, he will avoid the temptation. The tax increases announced by his predecessor Norman Lamont looked for a while as though they had helped close the "structural" budget deficit, the bit that economic growth could not whittle away. Unfortunately the Lamont medicine has worn off.

Slow growth in tax revenues due to corporate avoidance to the new "flexibility" of

the labour market have reopened the structural gap. If Mr Clarke entertains serious hopes of still being Chancellor after the election, he should be trying to solve the borrowing problem the next Government will inherit. All the same, the fact that the summer forecast gives him room for a minor tax cutting Budget if the politics require it must be something of a comfort.

manoeuvre there either. The regulator's view is that these are perfectly reasonable assumptions and there's not a snowball in Hades chance of the MMC being persuaded otherwise. Sulkily merrily in the corner, TransCo retorts that it has not yet been allowed to see the Coopers & Lybrand and WS Atkins reports on which the assumptions are based. I'll publish them then, says Clare Spottiswoode. Er, hold on, says British Gas, we didn't say publish. There's a lot of commercially confidential information in those reports and we don't want every tom dick and harry gaining access to it, do we?

Why not, says Ms Spottiswoode. Everyone complains about lack of transparency in utility regulation so let's publish and be damned. And so the debate, or rather slanging match, goes on, and on, and on. The sooner the MMC is assigned to the case the better for everyone. The MMC might itself be a somewhat discredited organisation these days. But anything seems better than this. If the regulator is indeed shown to have got it fundamentally wrong, then the already strong case for root and branch reform of our regulatory system becomes overwhelming.

I may have taken the four partners in Airbus and their sponsor governments a decade to agree to turn the consortium into a single corporate entity but in retrospect that will probably come to be seen as the

easy bit of the exercise. The hard part begins now and, if past experience is any guide, Airbus will need all of the three years it has given itself and more to emerge as a fully fledged commercial operation with its own assets and equity.

The most difficult issue is the respective valuations of the assets being contributed by British Aerospace, which has a 20 per cent stake, and the French and Germans, who each hold 38 per cent. BAE has a good case for arguing that its assets entitle it to more than 20% of the equity since its Airbus division, unlike those of the French or Germans, is profitable and efficient. BAE has also gone further than its Continental partners in subcontracting out its workshare.

Since BAE does not appear to want to increase its share of the equity, that would mean the other Airbus partners compensating it for the value of the assets it will contribute. BAE's shareholders would rightly castigate the management if it sold them short, but at the same time they need to look to the extra profit that will accrue if Airbus is placed on a truly competitive and commercial footing.

If the French can cede the principle that 38 per cent of each Airbus that rolls off the assembly line in Toulouse must be made in France, then BAE can afford to give a little as well. There is a bigger prize to be had - the prospect of a fully fledged European competitor to Boeing - which dictates that national considerations be put aside.

Major acts to stop regional squabbles over investment

MICHAEL HARRISON

John Major has intervened to prevent regional development agencies in different parts of the country bidding against one another for prestige inward investment projects.

The move is understood to have been prompted by Downing Street's anxiety to avoid unseemly squabbles between rival agencies and Government departments in the run-up to the general election, particularly on projects where large numbers of new jobs are at stake.

The Prime Minister is believed to have called in ministers from the Welsh, Scottish and Northern Ireland offices together with representatives from their regional development agencies to emphasise the need for a co-ordinated approach.

There was uproar in Scotland two months ago when it was reported that the Korean electronics giant Lucky Goldstar had decided to locate a £1bn plant in Wales. William Hague, the Secretary of State for Wales, is thought to have offered a subsidy of up to £150m to win the project, which could create 4,000 jobs.

The Koreans pointedly refused to confirm they had cho-

sen Wales, although it now appears that the plant will be sited in Newport, Gwent and that an announcement is imminent.

Scotland had been bidding to have the factory built in Lanarkshire while Ireland was also a contender.

News of Mr Major's intervention came as the Invest in Britain Bureau announced its most successful year yet with a record 477 inward investment projects in 1995-96 worth £7bn-£8bn, creating 48,000 new jobs and safeguarding a further 97,000.

In the past three years Britain has attracted 1,350 projects from overseas, creating or safeguarding 285,000 jobs.

The biggest single investment was a £1.1bn project by Siemens to build a semiconductor plant in the North East - one of 58 inward investments from Germany.

The President of the Board of Trade, Ian Lang, rejected suggestions that Britain was becoming increasingly semi-detached from the rest of Europe.

"I see no indication of any anxiety because the Government remains committed to Europe and the single market."

Mr Lang said that the policies of Labour would put inward investors off in droves.

But Tom Morrison, chief registrar of the Royal Bank of Scotland, which had been digging in its heels over the contract negotiations, said yesterday:

"There has been some move-

ment today and all the parties appear confident that it will be sorted out this week."

Ralph Walrond, managing director of Lloyds Bank Registrars, said: "I firmly expect all the contracts to be signed off this week. Crest will not be held up by contract squabbles and will be operational next week."

The contract disagreement was over who bears the cost of fines for delays in service if they

companies which already had operations in Britain. Expansion by existing investors accounted for 57 per cent of the 477 projects clinched last year, compared with 55 per cent in 1994-95 and less than half at the start of the decade.

The Securities and Investments Board will meet in a ceremony next Monday, to give the regulatory approval essential before the system can be inaugurated by Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The big share registrars that will use the system are also due to sign their contracts with CrestCo, the operating company, over the next 24 hours.

There have been hiccups in recent days over some of the details of the contracts between share registrars and the information network companies, Swift and Syntegra, a BT subsidiary, which handle the movement of data. These have to be signed at the same time as the contracts with CrestCo.

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trar of the Royal Bank of Scotland, which had been digging in its heels over the contract negotiations, said yesterday:

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The contract disagreement was over who bears the cost of

fines for delays in service if they

are caused by the network providers. But Mr Walrond said he understood this to have been solved a fortnight ago and the remaining details were "not showstoppers". CrestCo agreed to put a cap on the penalties to be paid by the registrars.

Crest is the settlement system

PETER RODGERS

Financial Editor

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ment today and all the parties appear confident that it will be sorted out this week."

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Crest is the settlement system

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market report/shares

DATA BANK

FT-SE 100
3752.3 +10.8

FT-SE 250
4347.7 +8.2

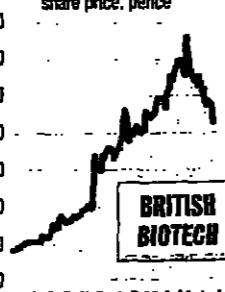
FT-SE 350
1886.5 +5.0

SEAO VOLUME
701.6m shares,
29,618 bargains

Glits Index
92.80 +0.14

SHARE SPOTLIGHT

share price, pence



JASON J FMAMJJ

British Biotech leads an ailing sector in the sickbay

British Biotech, only a few weeks ago the wonder share of the then high-flying drugs sector, slumped deeper into the sick bay, falling 135p to 2,128p – only 75p above its rights issue price. The nil paid rights units collapsed 133p to 80p.

The agony at BritBio does not end there: its £143m rights cash: the call has been underwritten by Kleinwort Benson.

The group has led a ragged retreat of the biotech shares.

In May the company and the sector were riding high with investors stampeding into the fledgling drug groups, many of them nursing little more than sky-high hope factors.

Like most of the pack, BritBio is deep in the red. Last month it accompanied its £143m cash call with a loss of £25.1m. But it made encouraging noises about its Marinastat cancer treatment and Lexipafant, a pancreatic product.

All then seemed well. The

shares, although below May's 3,265p peak, were comfortably above the rights price and there was little danger of the underwriters being called in to earn their rich fees.

But BritBio came under pressure. Merrill Lynch helped the shares on their way when it said they were overpriced and, as is so often the case in the stock market, there was a sudden change in sentiment. BritBio was not the only to suffer: most of the so-called biobabes suddenly discovered just how tough the market can be.

Still, it could be argued BritBio has seen it all before. Last year its shares were 445p.

Among the other drug shares looking sick are Celltech, off 34p to 535p, after a peak of 682p; Chiroscience 8p down at 366p after 514p and Cortes International 12p lower at 238p after 418p. The biobabes are collectively 44 per cent

off their high points.

The sudden sickness in the drugs sector is threatening the flood of new issues. Beezon Gregory denied stories that Alzyne, due to arrive on AIM with a £10m valuation, was in any danger. Cambrio from Henry Cooke Lumsden seems to be struggling and there is talk its valuation has been cut.

Amid the carnage the granddaddy of the sector and leader of the pack, Glaxo Wellcome added 6p to 379p.

Glaxo's display was in line with the rest of the market with the two leading indices making modest headway.

BskyB, the satellite television station, was the best performing blue chip, gaining 14p

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

to 468p following its digital TV deal with Bavarian mogul Leo Kirch.

Tomkins' attempt to throw off the yoke of the conglomerates image gathered strength with a 7p gain to 258p but Hanson, with NatWest lowering its sum-of-the-parts figure from 165p to 133p, shaded to 171.25p and BTR lost 3.5p to 243.5p.

Granada, as Whitchall rather belatedly cleared its £3.9bn Forte bid, gained 9p to 834p and British Airways rose 6.5p to 549p on hopes of a settlement with its pilots.

Expectations of takeover bids, as always, drifted around. Earmarked for corporate

activity were Standard Chartered, 17p higher at 652p and Cadbury Schweppes, up to 513p. Luxury goods group Venetia, on renewed hopes of a mop up bid from Richemont, the Swiss-based South African controlled group, improved 15p to 618p.

Regional TV shares were again in demand with HTV up 7p to 557p and Yorkshire Tyne Tees edging ahead 3p to 1,258p.

Tesco, on fears it is about to mount a £2.5bn French supermarket strike which would provoke a rights issue, fell 1.5p to 300.5p.

BTG, the old British Technology Group, celebrated its inclusion in the supporting index with a 30p gain to 1,895p. It replaced the suspended Wickes.

Railtrack edged ahead 1p to 215.5p against its 190p flotation price. The shares have nudged 130p.

On the grey market British Energy, with the public offer

closing today, was 111p to 113p.

Avocet, the garage group, reversed 9p to 93p following accounting problems at its Ian Skelly Manchester dealership.

Frost, the petrol retailer caught in the cross fire of the superstores price war, edged forward 2p to 98p with PDFM lifting its stake to 14.5 per cent.

There is talk a hedge fund has a substantial short position. Eurocamp fell 13p to 204p on a profit warning.

Emmex rose 4p to 55p. After hours Lafarge lifted its stake to 49 per cent and its bid to 52.5p.

Avocet Mining, a gold and tungsten group which arrived through James Capel at 240p in March, gained 14p to 180p. The shares have been down to 142p.

On Ofex, Skynet, developing a car security system, jumped 55p to 250p. It was floated at 27.5p.

TAKING STOCK

Sunleigh, struggling maker of baby buggies and golf trolleys, accounted for a large slice of the market action. It achieved a turnover of \$4.7 million shares with parcels of up to 9 million going through. The price moved up 0.5p to 5p.

The company has had a torrid time with only one profit recorded since 1990.

The market guess is one of the institutional shareholders has called it a day, perhaps leaving the way clear for a cash and management injection.

Interim profits of Cookson, the industrial materials group, could be disappointing. Greig Middleton is shooting for £84m against £81.2m.

For the year it is looking for a gain from £181.2m to £208.5m. The shares rose 4p to 262p.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (PE) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.

Other details: r Ex rights x Ex dividend A All u Unlisted Securities M All suspended pp Party Paid per Nil Paid Shares + All Stock

Source: FT Information

The Independent Index

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from SISQ. Simply dial 0891 123 323 followed by the four-digit code printed next to each share. To access the best share prices dial 0891 123 323 followed by one of the two-digit codes below.

FT-SE 100 - Real-time 00 Sterling Rates 04 Premium issues 00
FT-SE 100 - News Report 01 Bullion Report 01 Water Shares 00
UK Company News 02 Wall St Report 20 Electricity Shares 41 03
FT-SE 100 - Foreign Exchange 03 Tokyo Market 21 High Street Banks 41 03
Foreign Exchange 03 Anytime with a tone-dial telephone can use this service. For a detailed description of the Independent Index, including its portfolio facility, phone 0871 223 333. For assistance, call our helpline 0871 873 4375 (930am - 5.30pm). Calls cost 30p per minute (cheap rate), and 40p of all other times. Call charges include VAT.

Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock Volumes Stock Volumes Stock Volumes Stock
BTR 200000 British Gas 940000 Unilever 650000 SMC Bechtel 157000
BP 120000 Hanson 650000 NatWest Bank 630000 Glaxo Wellcome 570000
BP 120000 Tesco 630000 Cable & Wire 600000 PFC 560000
Cossor 120000 Tarmac 700000 British Telecom 560000 Orange 560000

FT-SE 100 Index hour by hour 14.00 3732.1 up 5.6
Open 3743.3 up 2.8 11.00 3757.8 up 1.5
09.00 3746.7 up 5.2 12.00 3752.8 up 5.9
10.00 3754.1 up 2.6 13.00 3752.3 up 1.5

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BP 120000 Tesco 630000 Cable & Wire 600000 PFC 560

Mandela in London: South Africans who fled from apartheid into exile can feel proud of their nation – and cry a few tears



Grand tour: The Queen and Nelson Mandela enjoying the acclaim of the crowds outside Buckingham Palace

Photograph: Glynn Griffiths

Mandela greeted by black Irish Guard

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY
Defence Correspondent

It may not have looked that way, but the Guard of Honour for President Mandela yesterday was drawn entirely from members of the ethnic minorities. They were all Irish.

A quarter of the "Micks", as the Irish Guards are known, come from the Irish Republic, 35 per cent from Ulster and the remainder from Irish families in Britain.

But, conscious of criticism that black and Asian people were under-represented in the Guards, the Army managed to put one black Irish guard in the front rank.

With President Mandela's visit, the Army's recent drive to raise "ethnic awareness" was put to the test.

The 1st Battalion the Irish Guards is the unit currently on ceremonial duties, and the Army said it would not have been possible to draft the small number of black Guardsmen into London to greet President Mandela; nor did they see any reason why they should.

The Army has been made acutely aware that the proportion of black and Asian people in the forces, and especially in the Household Cavalry and five regiments of foot Guards, is unrepresentative of the nation as a whole.

A recent study by the Commission for Racial Equality highlighted discrimination against black people in the Household Cavalry.

Until recently, it was not possible to determine how many soldiers came from ethnic minorities, because records were not kept in that way. It was left to the Prince of Wales to remark that there were very few black faces to be seen under bearskins.

But since June 1, revised forms have been introduced as part of a system for monitoring the progress of ethnic minority applicants in all three services, and a separate record has been kept on the ethnic origin of all applicants to the Household Cavalry.

Equal opportunities awareness is now part of military command training at all levels: the first lectures were given at Sandhurst in August 1993 and at the Staff College.

The issue is also now raised during promotion courses for corporals and sergeants.

The man who made a rainbow shine

RAYMOND WHITAKER

The sky was threatening, but at least there was a rainbow. Traditional British ceremonial was no match yesterday for the sheer excitement that Nelson Mandela seems to inspire wherever he goes.

As his Rolls Royce swung into Horse Guards Parade for the formal welcome at the start of the South African president's state visit to Britain, more than 6,000 spectators waving the flag of his rainbow nation cheered, screamed and chanted in a manner never witnessed before at the arrival of a foreign leader. It seemed appropriate that the band of the Irish Guards played the theme from "Star Wars".

The large proportion of children in the crowd, many waving hand-drawn flags and posters, kept up the chants of "Nelson, Nelson" as he was greeted by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh. They continued even as the 78-year-old president, moving stiffly, inspected the guard of honour. On the dais, John Major must have wished he could provoke such adulation.

When Jacques Chirac came last month, there were a couple of thousand people here, no

more," said a veteran of such occasions. "As for the noise, I have never heard anything like it before."

"I confess to being something of an Anglophile," Mr Mandela says in his autobiography. "When I thought of Western democracy and freedom, I thought of the British parliamentary system. In so many ways, the very model of the gentleman for me was an Englishman." He visited England for 10 days in 1962, while on the run from the white government in South Africa; now he is back as president.

The cacophony did not lend itself to reflection about the symbolic importance of the occasion: about how Mr Mandela had travelled from breaking rocks on Robben Island to being a guest at Buckingham Palace, an honour never accorded to any of his white predecessors. That moment came only during the playing of South Africa's two anthems, first the Xhosa hymn [*italics*]Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika (God Bless Africa), then the Afrikaans anthem, [*italics*]Die Stem (The Voice). As a group of black children in the crowd sang the Xhosa supplication, there were tears among many spectators who had fled South

Africa in the apartheid years and settled in Britain.

Morris Mohlala, 48, exiled in 1983, had brought his 24-year-old niece, Gloria Alfred, from Cape Town, to watch. "What do I hope for from this? I hope there will be lots of investment

in South Africa, and that people won't concentrate so much on the crime issue," he said. Mr Mandela's chance to appeal for trade and investment will come today [wed] at a business conference in London's Barbican Centre.

Under apartheid Mr Mohlala would have been classified as black and his niece as "Coloured" (mixed-race). "But we're just one happy rainbow nation now," said Ms Alfred, who was wearing a "New South Africa" T-shirt. She clung to a

railing on the Mall to ensure that she could see Mr Mandela and the Queen pass by in an open carriage.

Last night there was a state banquet at Buckingham Palace for Mr Mandela and his daughter Zenani, who is married to a Swazi prince, but the president, who has retained the habit of rising early from his prison days, will be out planting a tree in St James's Park at 7.30am today. Tomorrow he is due to address a joint session of Parliament and receive honorary degrees from Oxford, Cambridge and six other universities, but in a BBC radio interview he singled out the visit he will make to Brixton in south London on Friday, saying he wanted to thank all those who backed his fight against apartheid.

The South African exiles in yesterday's crowd, however, wanted to thank Mr Mandela. Sally Smith was standing at the front in a Springbok rugby shirt — "and if you had told me that one day I would be wearing this, I would never have believed it." She was brought to Britain in 1977 by her mother, Margaret, a journalist who had fallen foul of the government.

"I'm going to cry today," was all Margaret could say, but her daughter spoke for her. "We came here when people hated everything South African. I've been here so long that I don't know which country I belong in any more, but today I feel very proud to be South African."

Handbagged: Mandela and daughter, Zenani, at the Palace with the royal couple

Photograph: Alf Kumalo



Menzies' measures bearing fruit

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

John Menzies, like its larger rival WH Smith, has had its share of problems over the past couple of years. Heavily dependent on newspaper wholesaling, it was badly affected by the newspaper publishers' decision to screw down distribution contracts a year ago. That compounded difficulties Menzies already faced as a result of the shake-up in the market following a 1993 Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry into the industry. The resulting profits warning in January hit the shares, but figures out yesterday suggest Menzies' attempts to tackle its problems are bearing fruit.

Pre-tax profits down 5.8 per cent to £35.9m in the 53 weeks to 4 May were better than the market was going for and the shares responded with a 15p rise to 57.4p yesterday. The results reflected a modest £1m recovery in newspaper wholesaling profits in the second half after a £4m slide in the opening six months, which bore most of the cost of radical measures to revitalise the business. A 14 per cent like-for-like sales growth in the second half augurs well for the division.

Initial or first full-year contributions from three operations bought in 1995 helped offset the dip in newspapers, pushing profits from the whole distribution division £1m ahead to £7.2m. But the group's efforts to ginger up its retailing operations were again frustrated last year.

The first year of a three-year plan to rejuvenate the John Menzies newsagents chain saw it chip in something over £2m to these figures, up from break-even before, with sales in refurbished stores showing an 11 per cent underlying rise. But the good work was undone at the Early Learning Centre, the toyshop chain aimed at younger children, where profits dipped over £3m. The 4 per cent sales decline suggests it may be running out of steam in the face of strong competition from the likes of Woolworths and Argos. Outside consultants are taking a wholesale look at the business, but it may struggle as birth rates fall.

Arguably the best news yesterday was the forthcoming management changes, which will see the family loosen its grip at board level at least, although

it retains control of over 50 per cent of the shares. David Mackay, who moves up from wholesaling to the chief executive's post, has impressed City observers.

Profits of around £4.2m would put the shares on an undemanding forward multiple of 12. They are reasonable value on prospects of further recovery, but the market is very tight.

Triple Bubbly in flat Midlands

If a Government-backed report published yesterday is to be believed the UK's Midlands is failing the UK when it comes to manufacturing productivity, investment and competitiveness.

Colin Cooke, non-executive director of Triple Lloyds, one of the region's best-known metal bashers, disagrees. "Mr Heseltine would be proud of us," he claims yesterday. His boast is not an idle one. In the year to March 1996 profits on continuing operations rose to £15.4m from £10.7m, helped by a £1.7m property gain, on sales 8 per cent higher at £190m.

The picture is more mixed on the automotive side. An increased pension charge and maintenance problems at the Precision Components subsidiary restricted the improvement in margins to 5.8 per cent from 5.6 per cent. However, demand for diesel engine components is strengthening and Triplets seems set fair to meet brokers' forecasts of £14.5m pre-tax for the full year.

At the higher end of expectations the shares, up 13p to 17.5p, stand on a prospective p/e of 10. The quality of earnings is unlikely to be enhanced if more property profits are booked, but the rating still looks a little mean.

Bespak set for growth

A shaft of light has fallen on Bespak. After a torrid three years and a management clearout, the maker of asthma inhaler devices and valves looks at last to be set on the growth track.

Yesterday's figures showing losses of £14m turning into profits of £16.9m in the year to 3 May overstates the extent of the recovery at the group. Underlying profits actually rose 58 per cent to £8.7m, after stripping out a £10.2m write back of a previous £18.6m provision as a result of resolving the dispute over the near-disastrous inhaler contract entered into with ML Laboratories.

Even so, management are clearly producing the goods. In the UK, the dry laundry powder inhaler in early 1995 helped drive profits 22 per cent higher to £7.6m. It is generating sales of 25m for Bespak and manufacturing capacity is being expanded. Meanwhile, the valves business has returned to more normal levels after decking in the previous year.

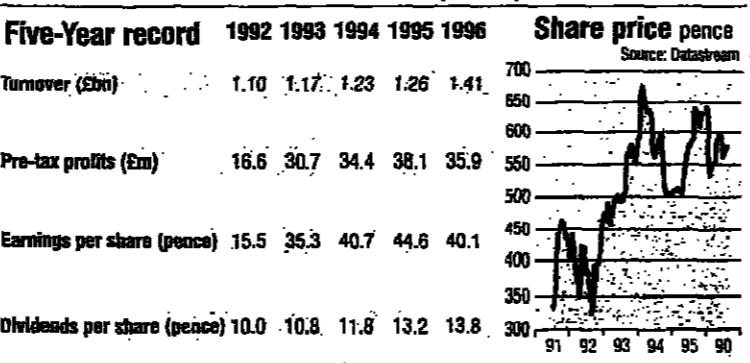
The once-troubled US business also seems to have turned the corner, with underlying profits quadrupling to £1.2m before restructuring charges. The Tenax North Carolina inhaler business saw sales rise 27 per cent. Bespak believes it has stabilised the fall off in sales of keyhole surgery products from Tenax Danbury in Connecticut after its main customer, US Surgical, saw its market share plummet.

The prospects for Bespak look brighter than they have for a while. As well as increased Accuhaler sales, it has Medeva's new generic salbutamol inhaler, Rhône-Poulenc Rorer's Ultrahaler (taken over with Fisons) and a couple of new products from ML to look forward to.

Profits of £10m this year would put the shares, up 27p to 4.20p, on a forward price/earnings ratio of 16. Hold.

John Menzies: at a glance

Market value: £323m, share price 57.4p



A man with a mission to bring films to London

CITY DIARY

JOHN WILLCOCK



David Potter: Aims to get the City in the can

the white-sock boys have paid him the ultimate punter's accolade and awarded him a nickname.

One senior economist recalls a similar anonymous investor who gave governments a fright by moving currency markets in the 1980s, who was dubbed simply "the Egyptian". No one ever found out who he was.

As for the Sheikh, who presumably phones in his deals from a hot tub, the economist muses: "He's probably just some lowly guy who works for Sumitomo."

The price per copy of the Treasury's summer forecast on the economy has risen from £6.50 last year to £7.50. This, as an economist points out, represents a 15.3 per cent increase, compared with headline inflation of just 2.2 per cent. Doctor, heal thyself.

When Granada's chief executive Charles Allen joined the company five years ago he suggested that they should buy five or six of the top UK football clubs as an investment. Boardroom colleagues thought the City would never wear it, and the idea was shelved. Since then, the City has done a 180-degree turn, feting clubs like Manchester United. Which does not console Mr Allen, since those clubs that have floated are already fully valued, with no bargains to be had. As ever with investment, Mr Allen reflected yesterday, timing is all.

John Menzies will step aside next year as chairman of the newspaper wholesaling company which bears his name after 45 years in the top slot. The Eton-educated Scot, who is 70 next year, becomes life president as part of a wider shake-up of senior management. His career spans an early stint in the Grenadier Guards and 11 years as a director of Vidal Sassoon, the upmarket shampoo company. Mr Menzies is a member of the Royal Company of Archers, a select body of men times even don the gear (including a feathered plumed hat) and shoot some arrows. A long way from shifting newspapers.

THE INDEPENDENT

Summer of sport

Wednesday 10 July 1996

THIRD TEST: Uninspiring England wrap up series but leave plenty of room for improvement

A victory that poses questions



DEREK PRINGLE
at Trent Bridge

England may have taken the unusual step of actually winning a series, but their solitary victory against a side in the throes of rebuilding was hardly resounding evidence of a revival, and despite the endearing type and methods introduced by their coach, David Lloyd, world domination is still clearly light years away.

When stumps were finally and mercifully drawn on this toothless contest, England had somehow managed to bowl India out. As this was more to do with the visitors not wanting to bring Test cricket into disrepute, by prolonging the agony of an already deceased game, England's bowlers can only take minimal credit.

By some bizarre interpretation of the old supply and demand curve, they were still charging money to get into this game at lunchtime, which seemed a bit rich. However, those folks enough to part with their cash would, after the previous torpor-ridden days, not have been disappointed.

For one thing, Sachin Tendulkar almost played the innings of the series and his 74 was simply total domination by another name. Coming in at 104 for 2, he lured the bowling to all parts and judging by the ferocity of his strokes, it was clear that he for one, was not prepared to swallowed up by the dreariness.

Sadly, that now appears to be the destiny of his captain, Mohammad Azharuddin, who completed a brief tour with his second single figure score of the match, when he was brilliantly caught at mid-off by Dominic Cork. By the time India play their next Test, he is

unlikely to be in charge.

By contrast, Saurav Ganguly, had every reason to be upbeat. But if his third century in successive innings eluded him,

of the remainder that fell during India's second innings, Mark Ealham managed to bag four, in the space of 17 balls. Unless injury intervenes over the next fortnight, he is virtually certain to play again at Lord's.

Less certain is the fate of his Kent team-mate Min Patel, who wheeled away into the rough without ever really troubling either left-hander or right. Having taken just a single wicket in the series, he is in that enviable limbo land of having learnt just about all there is to his art at county level.

He is phlegmatic, which is vital in a spinner. Yet if he is to improve, he must learn to spin the ball, a habit only a prolonged exposure to good players at Test level will help promote. On the evidence so far, he may not get it, and Ian Salisbury will undoubtedly become the name, as pitches become drier.

After the match, Atherton identified that England had settled on a nucleus of players, but were still trying to fit in the final pieces. Whether or not that nucleus currently contains Graeme Hick is unclear, but with Alec Stewart playing well and Nick Knight recovered from injury, Hick has two weeks to convince the selectors he should be part of the revival.

However, when stripped to its bare essentials, England's resurgence has amounted to little more than a couple of competent one-day performances, followed by a decisive victory at Edgbaston on a surface unfit for Test cricket.

If England had truly turned a competitive corner, then they would not have allowed India to get back into the series with such a limp bowling performance at Lord's, especially after their batsmen had battled their way to 344 in trying conditions. By the way Pakistan appear to be shaping up against the counties.

England will not find their second opponents of the summer quite so obligingly slow to start.

That said, England are virtually unrecognisable from the team that returned home from Pakistan last March. Since then, Lloyd has managed to raise both effort and energy levels, and if certain aspects of their cricket remains tentative, their

INDIA	total 144 for 3	extras	overs	MONGOLIA
DAVID	3			
BILKAR	30			
bowls 15				
overs 10				
wickets 1				
runs 31	32	6	18	51
1 17 2 103 3 140 4				5
7 8 9				
1st Inn 2nd Inn				
INDIA	521			
ENGLAND	564			
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12				

Lloyd
upbeat
despite
low-key
finish

JON CULLEY

As champagne corks popped in the England dressing room, the coach, David Lloyd, joined the captain, Mike Atherton, in brushing aside the negative aspects of a low-key draw in the final Test, and talking up their team's chances in the tougher test to come against Pakistan.

Lloyd insisted: "Although the game here has been a disappointment in some respects, India have two of the best bowlers in the world, one of the best leg-spinners and two fine strike bowlers—and we've beaten them."

Atherton dismissed the suggestion that the series against India had been merely a gentle warm-up for the summer's meatier confrontation. "We've never seen it that way," he said.

"And we can draw a lot of plus points from the series, such as the re-emergence of Nasser Hussain and Chris Lewis, the promise shown by Alan Mullally, and the good start made by Ronnie Irani and Mark Ealham."

However, the two found their views on Graeme Hick undermined by chairman of selectors, Raymond Illingworth.

Lloyd said that the Worcestershire batsman's form was not a matter for concern, while Atherton said: "He just had one of those series where things did not work out. I think he will be fine."

But Illingworth, in a television interview, said he thought Hick was tired and described his loss of form as "a mental thing."

"He needs to go away and become strong in the mind again," Illingworth said.

Illingworth also embarrassed the incumbent captain by naming Hussain as a possible future skipper. Atherton, mustering an awkward response, said that he saw the Essex batsman as "a good tactician and one of the guys I talk to on the field."

The Sussex player revealed two weeks ago to have failed a drugs test must now face a Test and County Cricket Board drug control panel after analysis of a second urine sample confirmed the presence of a prohibited substance.

Last night, the TCCB would reveal neither the substance involved nor the identity of the player, although the England A fast bowler, Ed Giddins, was named in news reports after the initial announcement.

The player has 14 days to prepare for the three-man panel, who could impose a four-day suspension, fine him up to £1,000, or refer the matter to a full TCCB disciplinary committee.

Tim Lamb, the board's cricket secretary, said: "Other sports may suspend people immediately they have failed a drugs test but that is not the way cricket sees it. We take the view that people are presumed innocent until proved guilty."



Final flourish: Sachin Tendulkar lifts Min Patel to the boundary yesterday

Photograph: Peter Jay

fielding has bristled with aggression and purpose.

Like India they have unearthed new talents and the fruition of Nasser Hussain's

battling talents will have been

one of the most satisfying aspects of the summer.

His century at Edgbaston

was crucial in setting up England's win and the fluency he showed here, was matched only by Tendulkar and Ganguly.

Nobody can have been surprised when Sandip Patil, the

Indian coach, nominated him

as England's man of the series.

Raymond Illingworth was full of praise for the Essex vice-captain. "He's really come on in the last year or so and he's a good fielder. He has a big future, maybe as captain in the long-term."

Although that will be news to Atherton, who was born in the same week as Hussain, the England captain will miss his assertive batting, especially against the spinners, should his broken finger fail to heal in time for the Lord's Test on 27 July.

He wants to leave and there is

no point in holding on to a player who is unhappy," Viv Anderson, Middlesbrough's assistant manager, said.

The Alan Shearer story yesterday reached the point where Oliver Stone could well have declared his interest alongside Manchester United, Newcastle and Milan.

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Another midfielder on the market is Middlesbrough's out-of-contract Jamie Pollock. The England Under-21 international, who is valued at £2m, did not report back for pre-season training yesterday and is understood to be a target for Aston Villa.

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to see darker forces at work.

United want Shearer and have kept up the pressure despite repeated rebuffs by Rovers to offers of £12m.

If United continue to be thwarted, PSV Eindhoven would welcome offers around £13m for the 19-year-old Brazilian striker, Ronaldo. United would have to move smartly, with Barcelona and Internazionale already fighting over his signature.

Wolves have agreed to pay Leicester City more than £1m for the striker Iwan Roberts. The fee could rise to £1.4m depending on appearances.

Football's disciplinary structure is to be streamlined beginning with next season's Coca-Cola Cup. Red and yellow card punishment—apart from violent conduct—will be restricted to the competition rather than across the board.

Venables' offer, page 2

In today's 12-page section

BRITISH GP

OLYMPIC GAMES

DAMON HILL
Test driver
who has come of age, Page 6

JOHNNY HERBERT
Driving at 200 mph
Page 6

Coventry move for McAllister

Football

NICK DUXBURY

Holidaymaker Gary McAllister returns home this weekend and could soon be packing again for a £3m move from Leeds United to Coventry City.

With Arsenal and Rangers having balked at the asking price for the 31-year-old midfielder, it is now up to the City manager, Ron Atkinson, to persuade the Leeds captain that a Sky Blue shirt would suit him better next season.

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Venables' offer, page 2



FRANKIE FREDERICKS
Catching up with the world's fastest man
Page 5

2 sport

Converted starting to lose their faith

Since taking Murdoch's millions, the Super League has run into problems. **Dave Hadfield** looks for a cure to the game's ills

Last Wednesday was, even for the true believers in the flawed concept, the saddest day so far for Super League.

In almost eight tortuous hours at Wigan, the game's ruling council did everything it could to demonstrate that the vision of a vibrant, expanding game held out when rugby league took Rupert Murdoch's £87m last April was a mirage.

Their main task sounded straightforward enough: to decide whether South Wales should be "fast-tracked" into Super League.

If the declared aim of a truly national competition, reaching out to new areas and new audiences, meant anything, then the answer had to be yes.

But then the clubs discovered something that stopped them in their tracks. Admitting South Wales to their top table would cost each of them five per cent of their Murdoch money - around £45,000 per season for existing Super League clubs.

"We can't commit ourselves to that," said those clubs' representatives. So away they went, postponing verdict on the Welsh initiative until next Friday.

That gives South Wales a very good chance of dying of neglect, something which would be worse than merely missing another opportunity.

Without a Super League club, there will be, within a couple of years, no viable Welsh national side and no European Championship. Given that the one tangible result of Super League worldwide has been to wreck the international calendar, that would be a further self-inflicted wound that the code cannot afford.

It suits the League's chief executive, Maurice Lindsay, to be able to shake his head in exasperation at the council's incompetence. The more incompetent it appears, the greater the likelihood of even



When the Broncos met the Bulls: London and Bradford, two of Super League's on-field success stories, lock horns last month

more power being concentrated at Lindsay and his board of directors.

But the game's central administration cannot wash its hands of responsibility for the shambles last week. It is another example of the lack of foresight in the mad panic to grab the money last April.

The result of that panic is that the structure is not right. The season is not long enough to be financially viable, especially with gates at their current, bitterly disappointing levels. Clubs such as Wigan and Leeds, to quote the two biggest, are playing fewer games in front of fewer spectators.

Even Lindsay now admits that there was a miscalculation;

a belief that the deal had to be done at break-neck speed before Super League and the Australian Rugby League came to terms and Britain's value as a pawn in the battle went through the floor.

Fifteen months later, that settlement is no closer, but in the frenzy of the time the money was all dished out as sweeteners to ensure that clubs voted for the revolution, leaving nothing in the pot to actually finance any progress towards the situation that Lindsay predicted so grandiloquently - with clubs in major cities in Britain and beyond.

Already, the League has had to cream some cash off the Super League clubs' allocation to

keep their smaller brethren in line and then some more to finance the game centrally.

Now, it is clear to even the doziest members of Council that the addition of any other club to Super League will involve hacking away at each club's slice of the cake still further. So, far from it being easier to expand the code, it is considerably more difficult.

One consequence of the hours spent on the South Wales question was that all the other gripes and worries that have been gathering momentum this season were ignored.

A sign of just how deep the doubts run, though, came when Alex Murphy said publicly what others are saying in private

- that the game should switch back to winter.

The idea that a move back to winter will cure all the game's ills is as specious as the mirror-image illusion of summer rugby as the universal palliative 18 months ago, but Warrington's football executive would attract a good deal of instinctive support. His club is certainly one of a majority to have derived no appreciable benefit from summer rugby so far.

"I've seen that people are blaming the fact that we're playing in summer," says Chris Caisley, the chairman of the one club to have really thrived on the change, the Bradford Bulls.

"I find that pathetic. Some clubs need to have a look at

themselves and ask whether they should be in Super League at all.

"My vision would be for them to go and make way for South Wales, a team in Newcastle and one in the Midlands. Clubs that have done nothing to make Super League work should ask themselves whether they deserve to be in it."

When you compare Caisley's blueprint with the current reality, it is clear that the game has missed its big chance to restructure itself. A Super League planned on the basis of geographic spread and catchment areas would have deserved the name Super; instead, the League muddied it up with a hopeless attempt at forced mergers followed

by a retreat to the status quo.

Small wonder that Caisley came out of the meeting looking grim, but he believes the game could yet adopt the radical changes that are needed, with relocations and amalgamations back on the agenda.

"I think my own club should merge, with Halifax or Leeds the obvious candidates. What a power that would create!" And this is the club with more reason than any to be pleased with its progress.

"We have worked really hard, but we look over our shoulders and see nothing happening. Those who waited for the Rugby League Council to make something happen last Wednesday know what he means."

Britain's Kiwi tour plans in a muddle

Confusion surrounds Great Britain's tour to New Zealand this autumn with the news that the host country has plans for a four-nation tournament at the same time, writes **Dave Hadfield**.

The League here has released dates for a tour of Papua New Guinea, Fiji and New Zealand which includes three Tests against New Zealand in October. However, the NZRL president, Graham Carden, has thrown that blueprint into doubt by announcing a series of Super League double-headers, involving New Zealand, Australia, Great Britain and PNG, in Auckland, Brisbane, Christchurch and Sydney.

The plan, which depends on Super League's Australian court appeal succeeding, has surprised even the New Zealand coach, Frank Endacott, who said that he was "as confused as anyone else" by Carden's announcement.

The League is equally bemused by the alternative plan, and will be seeking clarification from Carden. The episode is the latest in a tangled tale of tour plans this year. Originally, Great Britain were due to tour Australasia this summer, but that was scrapped after the advent of summer rugby.

The next version was a tour based on Australia in October and November, but that has been blocked by the continuing battle between Super League and the Australian Rugby League.

St Helens and Warrington are rivals for the services of the Auckland Warriors prop Julian O'Neill, who is being allowed to leave for Britain to further his career.

One overseas player already with Saints, the Australian forward Derck McVey, has escaped possible disciplinary action by being told by the League that he has no case to answer after being placed on report during the defeat at Bradford last Friday.

Carl Metcalfe, a local businessman, has been confirmed as the head of the consortium which has taken over Keighley Cougars. "I and the backers who share my views have several million pounds of personal wealth at our disposal," said Metcalfe, whose plans include increasing the ground's capacity to 12,000.

Pakistan a truer Test

Henry Blofeld on the tasks England's cricketers face despite their series triumph

Even in that first Test innings his walk to the middle was relaxed and almost unconcerned, an impression he continued to give in whatever he did at Lord's and Trent Bridge.

His defensive technique is excellent, his strokes are all impeccably formed and he bats with something of the easy, angular grace which seems to be the prerogative of left-handers. His seam bowling is not negligible either.

David's emergence has been

scarcely less emphatic and he has displayed many of the qualities shown by Ganguly, not least as far as his temperament is concerned. India are indeed fortunate to have found two such talented young men - David is 23.

For England, it has been a start. Victory in the one-day series has done something to

banish the memory of the disastrous limited-overs cricket in South Africa and Pakistan, in the World Cup, during the winter. Victory in the first Test then put everyone in the right mind for the more serious business of the summer.

The Edgbaston pitch played into England's hands and the drawn Lord's Test put it all back into a truer perspective. Even so, Nasser Hussain's arrival is as big a gain as Ganguly's is for India, and it now looks as if that troublesome No 3 spot has at last found the right occupant.

Pakistan will provide tougher opposition. Before the end of August it would be nice to think that the best spinner in England, Phillip Tufnell, will be back in his rightful position and that Nick Knight's fingers do not continue to get into trouble. It would be a help, too, if Graeme Hick could clear his muddled head.

Victory over India was a start but there is still plenty to do before we can look Australia in the face.

Venables offered role to run Portsmouth

Football

Martin Gregory, the Portsmouth chairman, faces an anxious wait to see if he has managed to tempt Terry Venables into staying in English football. Venables has been offered a partnership to run the First Division club and will pull over Gregory's offer during a two-week holiday in Bali

as he contemplates his future in the game.

Venables said his links with the Gregory family - which stretch back to his days at Queen's Park Rangers - may help sway him towards joining Portsmouth. "I don't really know where my future lies, but Jim Gregory is an old friend and I will do anything I can to help," Venables said.

Gregory, the son of the club's

owner Jim, wants Venables' influence to help revive the fortunes of Portsmouth, who escaped relegation last season on goal difference. The partnership would involve Gregory providing money from the sale of his business empire, with Venables using his expertise and contacts to help Portsmouth reach the Premiership.

"If we can get Terry, this club would take off. He has been a

Christie flexes sore muscles before Atlanta

Athletics

MIKE ROWBOTTOM

Limford Christie, who pulled out of last Friday's Oslo Grand Prix in order to have treatment on a sore hamstring, returns to action tonight in Nice. He faces the man who succeeded him as world 100 metres champion last year, Donovan Bailey.

Neither Christie nor the Canadian have managed to make any impression thus far into the

season on Frankie Fredericks, who beat both in Lausanne a week ago, missing the world record by 0.01 sec. But Bailey, who has a 1996 best of 9.93, will be a serious test of Christie's fitness with the opening heats of the Olympic 100 metres only 16 days away.

Elsewhere in the meeting, Algeria's Hassiba Boulmerka makes a rare pre-championship appearance at 1500 metres, the distance at which she is world and Olympic champion. The

result will be watched with interest by Britain's Kelly Holmes, beaten to the world 1500m gold by Boulmerka last summer. The 26-year-old Army sergeant pulled out of the Stockholm Grand Prix on Monday night with sinusitis and yesterday withdrew from Friday's 800m run at Crystal Palace.

It means the double world champion Bev Birch, 32, has pulled out of the British women's sprint relay squad for the Olympic Games in Atlanta because of work commitments.

No one's playing in the NatWest Trophy now.

It's much too serious for that. For the 16 teams left in the NatWest Trophy, today's Second Round is more than just a game. It's a passport to the Quarter-Finals.

NatWest
More than just a bank

National Westminster Bank Plc.

Personality
she is what she is really
an average or has been since taking
her first serious steps in her sport as
a 14-year-old in Tonbridge.

July 10 1996

A day at the Regatta with BMW man, Dave and Denise

BEING THERE



Ten years ago, before boom became bust, **Jonathan Rendall** sold the pleasures of Henley a hundred times over. This year he went back

The line of traffic snarled out of Henley, at a complete standstill. The Regatta entrance was still two miles away. The BMW in front suddenly revved up and disappeared down the drive of a country house to the left with a frustrated swerve. I followed it. A hand-written sign on the drive said: "Regatta parking £5." But when we got down to the house there were no other cars there. The place seemed to be some sort of religious retreat. Everything was painted pale green.

The BMW and I drove into the middle of a vast empty lawn. The tinted window lowered: a man, early thirties, blond, blue blazer and cream trousers, either very posh or fake very posh. "Is this the parking?" he said. I said I didn't know. I thought seemed to be simultaneously occur that maybe this lawn was not meant to be driven on. "We could always park back there," I offered, gesturing at a compound of pale-green Nissen huts by the side of the drive.

We parked on some loose gravel

in front of a sign reading "Pilgrim House". The man from the BMW strode off saying: "We'll get a swift

exit from the regatta, eh?" I

looked around for someone to pay the £5 to, but there was no one about.

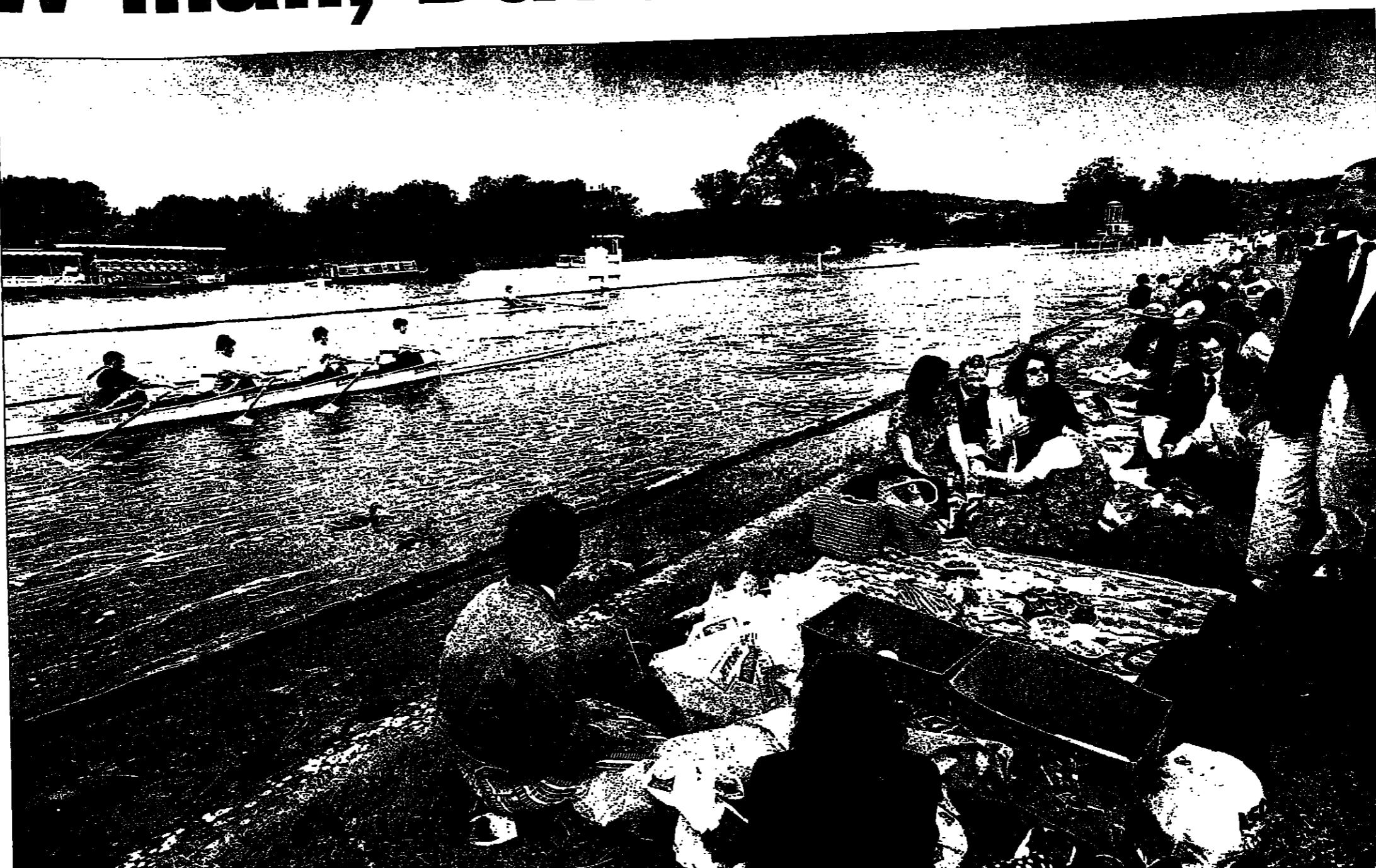
Further up the main road, the crowds were moving along the pavements. Dotted about were rowing followers, some quite elderly, in

coloured, striped blazers and caps. They looked far more authentically like tubes of refreshers than David Seaman does. But they were easily outnumbered by the corporate Johnnies, in panamas, and the blazer-and-flannel outfits, except they were more ill-fitting than BMW man's, either slightly too big or too small, so that they looked like overgrown schoolboys on their first day, wearing either hand-me-downs or uniforms their mothers said they would grow into.

Ah, Henley. How many times

have I spoken that word? A thou-

sand? 1,500? Not that I've ever spoken it, to my knowledge, at any time other than 10 weeks in 1986. That was the cowboy heyday of corporate hospitality. It had just taken off. The



Tales from the riverbank: Picnics by the Thames hold a greater attraction than the rowing competition at the Henley Royal Regatta

people who were buying it didn't know the boom was about to go bust. Fly-boys and spivs were setting up hospitality companies all over London. Then they hired graduates or resting actors with middle-class voices to sell it over the telephone, cold-calling. There were some ex-Sandhurst officers who did it as well. They sold a lot.

I can still remember the patter, the menus. "Yes, Remenham Court, Henley. We've had a late cancellation and Tony/Philip/Patrick at IBM/Shell/Hansons said you might be interested. But I've got to know today, Steve. It was Steve wasn't it?" Uh-huh. Of course. Champagne reception late breakfast, 11am. Four-course lunch, afternoon tea. Jazz band.

Yes, all at a most reasonable 1,000 per cent mark-up. And by the way you can't see any of the action from the marquee because it's about two miles from the course. We'll try to get a minibus. But this was the 1980s, so they went for it anyway.

And the beauty of Henley was that no one wanted to see the action in any case.

Ten weeks was about average be-

fore people got fed up and left. Like

they'd been lured by a wholly mis-
leading newspaper advertisement for "a career in international media

and sports promotion". One of the

other callers was an actor who is now

DI-something in *The Bill*. The only

one who stayed longer were the

ex-Sandhurst officers.

Then in 1987 the bust came. There was some sort of hospitality scandal at Wimbledon. The spivs rented houses on Wimbledon Hill for the fortnight and put up the marqueses in the gardens. It was all unlicensed, cash-in-hand, toutsville. A newspaper sent a helicopter up. There was a hilarious overhead shot of all the marqueses. The police got involved. Sorry officer, all I did was

leave the bosses with the clients over lunch and come back for the afternoon-tea session.

Denise was wearing a black cocktail dress that was rather too small. She was slightly drunk. Dave was definitely encouraged by this. But it was still early days, and they were talking business. "I mean, he didn't tell me directly he wanted a new marketing manager," Dave said. Denise and Ken nodded. Ken was wearing a new panama hat somewhat self-consciously. The hat was perched at a jaunty angle, but you could tell its unusual presence weighed down on Ken like a lead weight.

After that the spivs moved out or reinvented themselves and the big leisure operators moved in, so now it is a respectable industry, supposedly.

I first saw Dave sitting outside a marquee and moved along the bank to the start and the finish. This was about midday, among the ruins of the

champagne-reception-late-breakfast (nothing changes). He was in components, mid-to-late thirties. He was sitting with Ken and Denise. They were from the same company, but they had never met before. They were successful reps. They hadn't been invited to the company four-course lunch. They were there to mingle with the clients at the start, get the atmosphere going, then

leave the bosses with the clients over lunch and come back for the afternoon-tea session.

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4 the cricket page

Hidden Personality
She showed talent immediately, acquiring an impressive collection of age-group titles and becoming an English Schools champion.

Bailey's patience rewarded

Success in a Lord's final would be a fitting reward for Northamptonshire's captain. He spoke to Adam Sreter

Barbados, 1990. Curly Ambrose is steaming in to bowl for a rampant West Indies while at the other end his Northamptonshire team-mate Rob Bailey settles at the crease. The ball is too good for Bailey and whistles through to the wicket keeper at lightning speed, perhaps brushing the batsman's thigh on the way. Jeffrey Dujon takes the ball safely and his and his slip fielders claim a catch. Viv Richards infamously running fully 40 yards to demand a guilty verdict from the umpire, Lloyd Barker. Slowly he raises his finger and Bailey trudges back to the pavilion, having failed again to make an impression as an England batsman.

One way or another, it was not to be for Bailey and England. He played four Tests, all against the West Indies, and did not manage a fifty. He was only 26 at the time but he has not been asked back. It was a sad end to a traumatic period in his life, after he had turned down a large amount of money to go to South Africa with Mike Gatting's rebels in the hope of further honours for England. His father, a popular Staffordshire policeman, was dying of cancer while Bailey was attempting to make the most important decision of his career.

But although his loyalty to England went unrewarded, his loyalty to Northamptonshire was soon to start paying dividends. The club he joined as a 16-year-old after progressing through the North Staffordshireshire and South Cheshire League appointed him vice-captain in 1991 and, despite offers of captaincy from other counties, Bailey was content to bide his time. This winter it was all change at Wantage Road.

Allan Lamb relinquished the captaincy after six seasons and, in the face of competition from one or two of the other senior players, Bailey was promoted. In addition to his appointment, John Emburey was drafted from Middlesex as player/coach. Neil Foster, the former Essex and England fast bowler, was put in charge of youth development, and Ambrose returned for his final season with the county, to replace Anil Kumble as overseas player.

On Saturday Bailey has the chance to put a trophy in the cabinet in his first season as captain and, despite their disappointing form in the Championship, victory over Lancashire at Lord's in the Benson and Hedges Cup will undeniably mean a successful start for this most popular of cricketers. First, though, Northamptonshire have to travel to Lancashire's headquarters for a NatWest Trophy second-round tie today.

"Ideally, we wouldn't have wanted to play them three days before in the NatWest game."



Victory for Northamptonshire in the Benson and Hedges on Saturday will crown Rob Bailey's first season as captain

Photograph: Robert Hallam

Bailey admitted, before going on to assess the qualities of the cup holders. "They're a bit like ourselves, they bat down the order as they showed against Yorkshire [in the semi-final] when Warren Hegg scored 80 off 60 balls coming in at number eight. This season they haven't got a Wasim Akram, someone you think, 'we've got to see him off, he's a big danger, but we respect them all as individuals.'

The Northamptonshire side that went so long unbeaten in one-day cricket this season virtually picks itself for the final, with Mal Lye now established as a batsman following Lamb's enforced retirement owing to his controversial forthcoming autobiography. The loss of Lamb as a player, and

adviser in the field, was a blow to Bailey but one that he has quickly come to terms with. "Once we realised he wasn't going to be playing we just had to get on with it. Lambie's one of

those things and it's given one of the younger lads a chance. That's the future of the club and we have to move forward."

"Obviously, getting some-

suited our spinners. We're still waiting for the dry spell to come, to get some dry wickets, and hopefully John's going to pick up some wickets for us as the season goes on."

As for his own contribution as captain, Bailey is cautiously optimistic. "It's something I've wanted to do for quite a while. I've always had my sights set on it and I was pleased to get a chance to do it. I'm reasonably

pleased with the way things have gone, but at the moment we've won nothing this season; that's why this week is such a massive one for us. If we win on Saturday we've got a trophy and that gives the lads heart to go back to Championship cricket and rescue something from that."

Bailey admits that Emburey's coaching of the county's younger spinners and his experience on the field has been useful, but if Northamptonshire look to any individual for inspiration it is Ambrose. "It's great when he's running in with his knees up round his chest. It's a lovely sight," says his captain, Barbados, it seems, is ancient history.

"It's all part of the game," Bailey said. "It's interesting because at the time Curly didn't actually appeal. But a few years ago when I mentioned it to him he just said, 'some you win some you lose', and that summed it up."

"Somehow, as Bailey stares into the distance reflecting on his misfortune, you get the feeling that defeat on Saturday would not be treated with quite the same equanimity."

"I'm reasonably happy with the way things have gone, but at the moment we've won nothing"

if not the best batsman who's ever played for Northampton. He's a very unselfish batsman, he averages 50 or 60 but it could have been an awful lot more had he been more selfish. He was a very entertaining batsman and a great loss to the side.

One like John Emburey has been a major bonus, but it's been difficult on the bowling side. Anil Kumble, who didn't miss a game last season and took 105 wickets in the Championship, takes some replacing. So far, the wickets haven't

been replaced. The loss of Lamb, the captain, and the loss of the coach, have been a blow to the team. The team is still strong, but it's been difficult on the bowling side. Anil Kumble, who didn't miss a game last season and took 105 wickets in the Championship, takes some replacing. So far, the wickets haven't

Why a draw is often the sign of real cricket



TIM DE LISLE

cricket skill. To encourage this once-great British quality, the Test and County Cricket Board changed the rules of the County Championship this year to give three

points for a draw.

The upshot is that there have already been 31 draws this summer, compared to 29 in the whole of last season. Whether this is an improvement is another matter. It doesn't seem quite the way to get the crowds flocking into Sophia Gardens, Cardiff, or Grace Road, Leicester.

The International Cricket Council is now meeting at Lord's to elect a new chairman, providing it can first agree on the rules of election.

The favourite, the Indian Jagmohan Dalmiya, has revealed himself in the past few days as a reformer and a visionary. This should guarantee that he doesn't get the job, nothing frightens cricket administrators so much as a bit of vision. But his ideas are worth discussing.

Dalmiya wants to make cricket a truly global sport and thinks this won't happen if so many Tests continue to be drawn. So he wants to find a way of cutting out draws. He mentions having an over limit, or time limit, on the first innings – say 120 overs.

This is the wrong means to the right end. Now that one-day cricket dominates the international scene, the definition of Test cricket is the form of the game in which overs are not limited. The two games complement each other very well. The last thing they need is to become more alike – except in one respect: there ought to be more results in Tests.

There are two better ways for Mr Dalmiya to achieve his aim. First, groundsmen could be required to report not to the home side but to the referee, whose instructions would be to prepare a pitch with some life in it. The danger would be that the whole world would go the way of Edgbaston, and too many fingers would get broken.

England have now drawn eight of their last 10 Tests. This is a slightly bogus statistic, because they did not draw any of the previous six. But it's not a trend you would want to see continued. Of the three Tests against Pakistan, the first is at Lord's, only a month after the last one, and another is at the Oval, where last year's pitch was a raging turn-off (England 454 and 223 for four; West Indies 692-8dec). Headingley alone promises a result.

England's winter tour is to be spent half in New Zealand, where the pitches are slow and low, and half in Zimbabwe, where they are slower and lower.

England is the only country where Test-match attendances are in good health. At this rate, they won't be for much longer. Crowds like to see wickets. Low-scoring matches are always gripping; high-scoring ones are often dull.

For the purist, a draw is often a sign of real cricket. Certainly the ability to fight for a draw is an important

Tim de Lisle is editor of Wisden Cricket Monthly.

Psychology to the fore in final dress rehearsal

Under normal circumstances, the Northamptonshire and Lancashire players preparing for today's second-round NatWest Trophy ties would be told to put aside all thoughts of their meeting at Lord's on Saturday. There is no point in such advice this year, however, as the rivals for the Benson and Hedges Cup must stage a full dress rehearsal in the 60-over competition at Old Trafford today. Whether this is good for either camp is debatable. Strengths, weaknesses and tactical possibilities will be fresh in the minds of the players but a one-sided match today would certainly have a bearing in psychological terms.

Not that there seems much prospect of that, however. Northamptonshire have the look of an impressively-equipped one-day side under Rob Bailey's captaincy, blending the maturing talents of Richard Montgomery, Russell Warren and Mal Lye with the wisdom of David Capel, Kevin Curran and now John Emburey, which gives them a decent hand in any game of this type, without even taking into account the potential for devastation Curly Ambrose brings to the contest.

But they will confront a Lancashire team which, for all their under-achievement in the Championship, can never be underestimated in limited-overs cricket, to which a record of six Lord's finals in seven seasons bears testimony. This will be their sixth B&H final, five of them since 1990, and they will be seeking to lift the trophy for the fourth time.

Batting virtually all the way down, and with six or seven bowling options, they possess any number of match-winners, from Michael Atherton at the top to Peter Martin at the bottom, as well as brilliant one-day specialists such as Neil Fairbrother and Warren Hegg.

But just as importantly they seem blessed with an unquenchable spirit, a self-belief so deep that defeat is never accepted until all hope has gone, as Yorkshire will readily confirm after this year's semi-final, when Lancashire won on the ropes at 97-5 but, after Fairbrother and Hegg had performed an heroic recovery, reached a target of 251 with the last ball, which Martin bludgeoned for two amid almost unbearable tension.

So much for the B&H. In the

apart, the ties with most appeal are at Edgbaston, where the holders, deprived of Dermot Reeve, continue their defence against Surrey, at Grace Road, where ebullient Leicestershire take on improving Sussex, at Derby, where Championship leaders Kent will have their work cut to overcome a team fired with renewed competitiveness under the captaincy of Dean Jones, and at Headingley, where Yorkshire, strong contenders for silverware this summer, meet Sunday League leaders Middlesex.

Fresh from successive victories over Yorkshire and Essex in the Championship, Leicestershire have the ability to sweep aside Sussex, especially

if David Milns continues in the form which enabled him to take 10 wickets in the match and complete a century against Essex, the first player for eight years to achieve this double.

Kent's worry at Derby is that injury-plagued Dean Headley, who limped out of the Championship match against Durham with an ankle injury, will be absent but Yorkshire are at full strength for the visit of Essex, with prolific Australian batsman Michael Bevan refreshed by a week's holiday in Spain.

Jon Culley

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Hidden Personality
All set for a glittering career, then? Seemingly but everything changed for her at 18, quite possibly after a poster on a high street window caught her eye.

Life in the fast lane, with no place as home

Pat Butcher talks to Frankie Fredericks, the quiet ambassador who has grown up with his native Namibia, about his emergence as a serious contender for the Olympic sprint double in Atlanta

It is not easy to catch up with Frankie Fredericks, as his opponents are learning with mounting alarm. The closer it gets to the Olympics, the faster the Namibian is running. One hundred metres in 9.87sec in a frigid Helsinki two weeks ago broke his personal best by almost a tenth of a second, a giant leap in sprinting terms. Then came a 9.86, the second fastest ever, in Lausanne a week ago. What is more, that was into a headwind, thus intrinsically faster than Leroy Burrell's 9.85 world record at the same venue two years ago.

To cap it all, he outleaped Michael Johnson in a 200 metres in a rainy Oslo last Friday evening, clocking 19.82sec to Johnson's 19.85 and denting the American's seeming imperviousness with a first defeat at the distance in two years, since the Rome Grand Prix in 1994 when Johnson lost to... Frankie Fredericks.

Fredericks did look to have got a "flair" in Oslo last

week - which happens when a sprinter anticipates the starting gun so well that he is out of the blocks faster than the echo and steals a march on his opponents, rather than getting a false start.

But it will have given Johnson plenty to think about in his tentative run-up to that never achieved Olympic 200 and 400 double.

It has also given everyone else the opportunity to consider that Fredericks is in line for his own Olympic double, the 100 and 200 metres. So low-key is Fredericks that we tend to forget that he has already won two Olympic silvers at those events, in Barcelona 1992.

Catching up with Fredericks in the more prosaic sense of getting him to sit down and chat about all this for a while is equally difficult. Fredericks is a very private person, staying in the background at meetings, speaking quietly, fobbing off folks with "I let my feet do the talking for me," which is also the closest he gets to cliché.

He was spotted at the British Olympic trials in Birmingham, of all places. Not so unusual, on second thoughts, given that he has been training with Britain's Olympic sprint champion, Linford Christie, for the

last six months. Fredericks was in Birmingham to lend support. And once cornered he was sweetness itself, and complimentary to a fault.

"When you train with someone like Linford, you are bound to get better. Working with him, you realise just how hard work is all about. I think it's beneficial for both of us. You need people at your level to train with. It's working out pretty well for me, and I hope it's working out for him".

It is easy to see why Namibia's first and best-known international personality, in sport or any other field, is also the country's best ambassador. Fredericks and Namibia grew up together, so to speak. The country has been independent of the old South Africa only since 1990, which just happens to be the year that Fredericks emerged onto the world stage as a top-class sprinter.

"I realised that by doing well I could also help my country become better known around the world. Fredericks did look to have got a

start, on a computer science scholarship to Brigham Young University in the United States. He was able to avoid the South Africa sports boycott, because the US college system is "closed". The additional advantage of the next few years was the world-class competition he could get against the likes of fellow students such as Michael Johnson, Leroy Burrell, and Andre Cason.

"The only really top people I'd never run against were Linford and Carl [Lewis], simply because they weren't in the American college system. So when I went to the World Championships in Tokyo in 1991 I wasn't overwhelmed, because I'd already run against most of those guys."

Fredericks had, in fact become the first foreigner to win the NCAAA (US colleges) sprint double. And in Tokyo in 1991, his first international experience, he was fifth in the 100, and won silver in the 200 metres. Extraordinarily, up to that point, Fredericks had concentrated on his

studies, which must have made him even more of an outsider in a US college system not noted for the academic qualities of its sports scholars.

"When I was at school, athletics in Namibia wasn't that big, and anyway it was the amateur era, nobody thought of a career in athletics.

"So I concentrated on my studies. I wanted to be somebody, do something with my life, and it seemed the only way to do that was through education".

Football was his first sporting love, and he played for national teams from the age of 13 through to a single appearance as centre-forward for the senior squad at the age of 21. "I wasn't bad, but I wasn't brilliant either."

But it has left him with an enduring love for the game that had him scurrying for the TV set whenever Euro 96 was mentioned. For the record, he named Germany as the winners before the end of the first round.

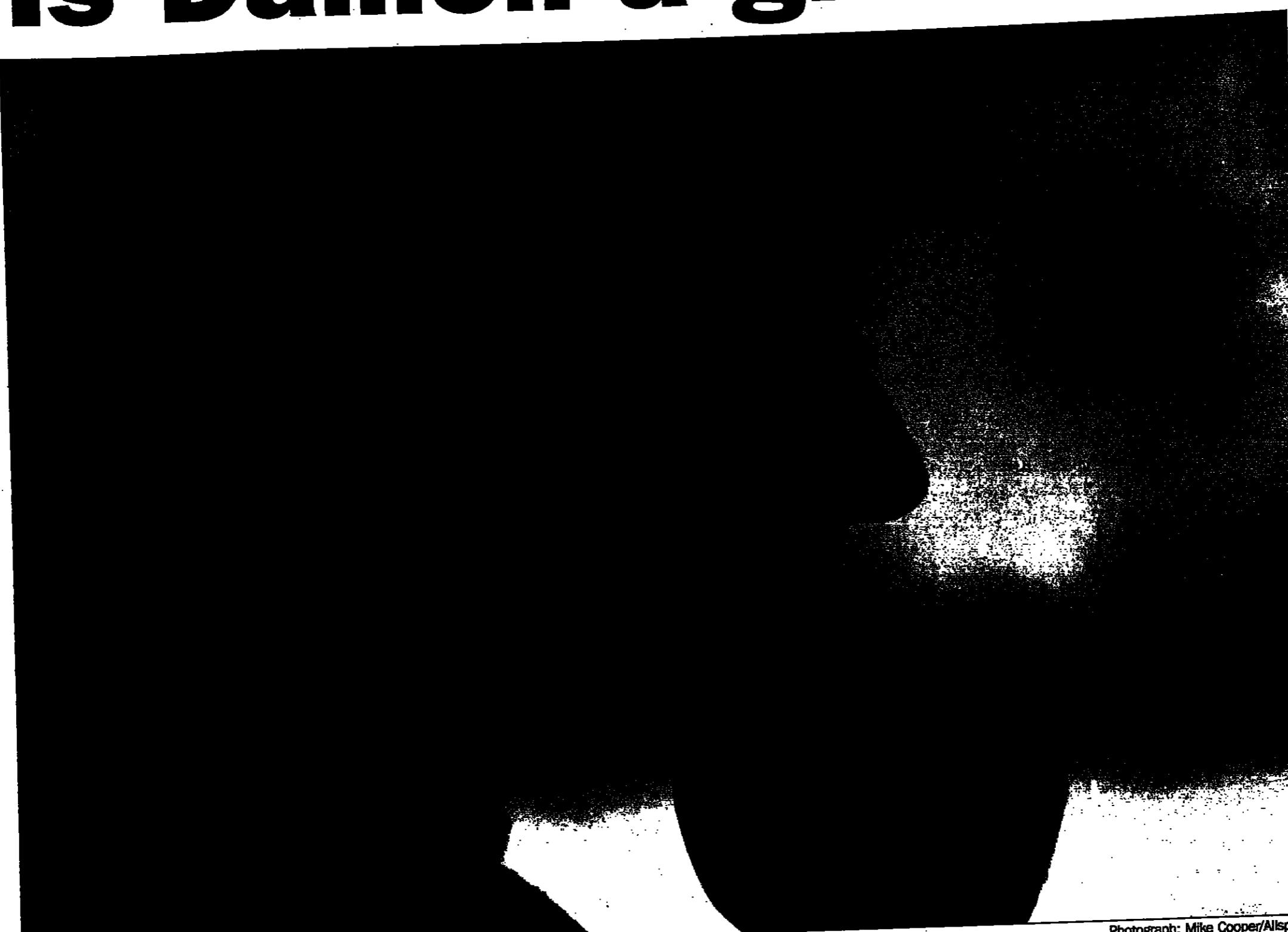
That was not too difficult, and by the same token people have been bandying Michael Johnson's name around as the "certain" winner of the 200 and 400 double after achieving it at the Gothenburg World Championships last year. I wondered if this almost perpetual publicity for Johnson annoyed Fredericks. "Not really

Frankie Fredericks: A track record 1992-96

Against the clock		World best	
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2100	100m	100m world best	100m world best
2101	100m	100m world best	100m world best
2102	100m	100m world best	100m world best
2103	100m	100m world best	100m world best
2104	100m	100m world best	100m world best
2105	100m	100m world best	100m world best
2106	100m	100m world best	100m world best
2107	100m	100m world best	100m world best
2108	100m	100m world best	100m world best
2109	100m	100m world best	100m world best
2110	100m	100m world best	100m world best
2111	100m	100m world best	100m world best
2112	1		

6 coming soon...british grand prix

Is Damon a great Briton?



Damon Hill has taken seven victories from the last 10 races and should gain the spoils in Sunday's British Grand Prix at Silverstone

Photograph: Mike Cooper/Alsport

Damon Hill has long had to live with claims that his success has been down to the superiority of his car. **Nigel Roebuck** believes the world championship leader now merits comparison with the best of British

If you were not a Nigel Mansell fan, the 1992 British Grand Prix at Silverstone stands as perhaps the most disagreeable motor race ever run in this country. It was not that the day was marked by tragedy, for there was no accident of consequence, but that the uglier face of contemporary sport showed itself for the first – and so far only – time in motor racing.

Mansell was on a roll that summer. Driving the Williams-Renault FW14B, the only car with computerised "active" suspension in the field, he had a car more manifestly superior to its rivals than had been seen since the years of Mercedes-Benz domination in the mid-Fifties. Arriving at Silverstone that weekend, Mansell had won six of eight grands prix in 1992, and was clearly on course for the world championship.

He was, emphatically, the people's champion, if not the paddock's, and the bulk of the crowd was squarely behind him, almost daring him to lose. One of the very fastest drivers the sport has seen, Mansell invariably found something extra at home, and qualifying times confirmed that no one, not even Ayrton Senna, was going to threaten him.

In truth, it was a consummately boring race, and quite unlike Mansell's mesmeric wheel-to-wheel defeat of Nelson Piquet at Silverstone five years earlier, but as is increasingly the way of it these days, the result mattered more than the event. As he stepped from his broken car, a few laps from the end, the great Senna was jeered, and when Mansell took the flag, hordes of spec-

tators spilled over the debris fences on to the track, wallowing in a glut of what some charitably called patriotism. It was only by luck that dozens of them were not mown down by following cars.

Mansell started first, and finished first, that day. At the other end of the grid was one Damon Hill, driving for a Brabham team then in its death throes. Hill ran at the back all afternoon, and finished 15th, four laps behind, stone last, unnoticed.

One year on, his fortunes had picked up.

By now Mansell, unable to agree terms for a renewal of his Williams contract, had flounced off to IndyCar racing in the United States, and Hill was the Brit on whom the fans' attention was focused. Alain Prost had replaced Mansell as the Williams-Renault team leader, and Hill had been picked to partner him. On the face of it, he was an ill-omen choice for the most sought after drive in racing, having run but a couple of grands prix for Brabham. As well as that, at 32, he was 10 years older than the typical Formula One rookie.

What he had, though, was considerable experience, not only of many years' racing in the lesser formulas, but also of working with Williams, for, while racing for Brabham, he had also been employed by Frank Williams as test driver. "Here I was, run-

ning endless test miles in the best car," Hill said, "and having to race the worst one. Believe me, I knew what I was missing, and never more than that day at Silverstone. I could only dream of one day being in Mansell's position."

As a test driver, Hill impressed Patrick Head, the Williams engineering chief, and when Mansell's departure left a vacancy in the team for 1993, Head advocated his promotion to the race team, arguing his lap times were consistently on the pace, his technical feedback good. In terms of continuity, it also made sense, for Prost, the incoming team leader, had no experience of Williams.

Thus, a slightly disbelieving Hill was signed, and by the time of Silverstone was a potential race winner. After qualifying second to Prost, indeed, he led the majority of the race, before halting with engine failure 18 laps from the finish. A year later, he won, after a period of upheaval and trauma for Williams. Prost had retired, and Senna, who replaced him for 1994, was killed at Imola, only his third race for the team. By July, the residues of shock still lay over the whole of Formula 1, and at the core of the drama was Hill, whose team-mate had been lost, whose Williams leadership had been lost, whose Williams leadership had been obliged, after only 20 grands prix, to take up.

The scenes were emotional when he won at Silverstone, but quite different from those after Mansell's triumph. There was less frenzy by far, which was fitting for a man very different from his predecessor at Williams. Mansell's best relationship in motor racing was always with the crowd, which he unashamedly courted, but Hill is quieter, more controlled, more English, perhaps.

There is an extrovert side to his personality – putting a guitar in his hands is like putting Clark Kent in a 'phone box, as he demonstrated at the post-race party – but phlegmatic is his usual way, and his team likes this about him. Mansell, wherever he was, had fresh problems flown in daily, which became wearisome over time, as Frank Williams acknowledged. "A great driver," he said, "but a hard man to like."

For Hill, by contrast, the team's affection is obvious, but there lurks an impression, even now, that his talents at the wheel are underrated, this perhaps a legacy of the manner of his arrival in the team, the promotion from mere test driver. Many a rival has pointed out, sometimes churlishly, that virtually throughout his grand prix career Hill has had the best car at his disposal, but in 1996 few could suggest that it has flattered him. This season his driving, his whole approach, has reached a new level.

"I've been astonished," Bernie Ecclestone, Formula One's leading power broker, said, "at the way Damon has raised his game. He doesn't have the natural talent of Michael Schumacher, but then neither does anyone else. What he's done is grow into a truly mature grand prix driver, and it's irrelevant that he's got the best car – the successful drivers have always had bloody good cars. You can't win all those races with bad cars, whoever you are."

All those races, indeed. From 60 grand prix starts, Hill has 19 victories, a strike rate which betters all in history save those of Juan Manuel Fangio and Jim Clark.

Peter Collins, James Hunt and Mansell, together with all-time great drivers like Sir Stirling Moss, Clark and Jackie Stewart, at some point won their home grand prix in the course of distinguished careers, but Hill's late father, Graham, despite taking two world championships, as well as victories in the Le Mans 24 Hours and the Indianapolis 500, somehow never captured the race he most wanted. "I feel," Hill said, when he won in 1994, "that this has filled a little hole in the family record."

Now, with seven victories from the last 10 races, he goes to Silverstone once more, and for the first time as heavy favourite, not least because Schumacher, unequivocally the best driver of the moment, is this season in a Ferrari neither truly competitive with the Williams-Renault, nor conspicuously reliable. This weekend the British Grand Prix crowd positively expects a Hill victory, and this, all things being equal, he should deliver. A riot, however, is not anticipated.

JACKIE STEWART	
BRIT-CHAMP	World Champion
Number of races	100
Pole positions	10
Fastest laps	10
Wins	10
Strike rate	10%
ALAIN PROST	
BRIT-CHAMP	World Champion
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DALE COUGHLIN	
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Working out the best place to get in shape

SO YOU WANT TO... JOIN A GYM

By Mike Richards

So you are unfit. Watching the cream of the world's sportsmen and women this summer at Wembley and Wimbledon has finally made you realise.

And with television likely to beam more than one bronzed, muscle-rippling Adonis into your living-room every day when the Olympics start next week, maybe, finally, it is time to get up off the sofa, fulfil that New Year's resolution and join a gym.

But where do you start? What should you insist on from a gym before parting with the often considerable monthly membership fee? And does it have to be a private club? It is important to be just as picky as you were choosing a new suit, after all the gym needs to be comfortable.

"Shop around, definitely," says Annette Burgess, of the Exercise Association, the governing body for fitness and exercise instructors in England. "You do not have to pay vast sums of money to go to a good gym. There are some dodgy places out there but also an increasing number of very good gyms and most are aware of all the health and safety requirements."

Choices range from council-run gyms and clubs in the high street to expensive private establishments at the top end. Burgess lists several key points to look for as you try out the alternatives. "You should expect to receive a fitness assessment, so the club can decide what your needs are, and full instruction about the machines and the correct technique and posture to use.

"Qualification of instructors is a difficult area, but I would have thought something from the British Amateur Weightlifting Association was an absolute minimum." Equally important are proper ventilation and heating, an unobstructed floor space and well-maintained machines.

The British are often reticent about their personal health, but it seems we are demanding higher standards now and that means there are more and better gyms to choose from. "Some of the sports centres over here look like they have the archaic equipment left over from the US," says Peter Bissell, an American from the leisure company Holmes Place which runs Camden council's sports centres.

But it is changing now. People are becoming better educated and they know gyms are not just for the super-fit or bums who have nothing else to do. People are expecting more from gyms now and they are starting to come into the 21st century."

Exercise Association 0171-278 0811; Fitness Wales 01222 520130; Fitness Scotland 0131-317 7243; Fitness Northern Ireland 01232 651103; British Amateur Weightlifting Association 01865 200359.



Pumping hearts: Devotees (above) work out at Swiss Cottage Sports Centre, north London. A fitness instructor (below) puts everyone through their paces

Photographs: Sarah Bancroft

A LEVEL-BY-LEVEL SAMPLE OF PLACES TO WORK OUT

Municipal gyms

Swiss Cottage Sports Centre

Winetka Road, London NW3 3PA

Owned by Camden Council. Fitness classes took over management of the facilities in 1990.

Fees: Pay as you play, apprenticeship £100 membership card (entitles holder to use of all facilities in Camden), £30, three months, £25, six months, £325. Includes induction.

Facilities: Refreshed gym and changing rooms since January. Gym has 55 pieces of equipment. Card allows unlimited use of all facilities including pools.

Clientele: No under-16s, all age ranges – there are supervised classes for children.

Telephone: 0131-433 6495

High-busy sports centre

Edinburgh City Council

Edinburgh, Scotland

Owned and run by City of Edinburgh District Council. New equipment installed in April 1994.

Fees: Pay-as-you-play fee of £2-£4, including concessions. Monthly user card £30-£50, three-monthly user card £70-£125. Includes induction and access to all facilities.

Facilities: More than 70 pieces of equipment, both cardiovascular and resistance. User card allows access to four other Fitness centres across the city.

Clientele: Broad age range, including families and children.

Telephone: 01452 307070

Gloucester Health and Fitness Club

Eastgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1DT

Owned and run by Gloucester City Council. Seven years old with equipment renewed regularly.

Fees: From £29.90 a month bronze to £38.10 a month gold membership, which allows access to all the facilities and classes free of charge. Includes induction.

Facilities: Three gyms, including body shop (free weights), sauna; Turkish baths, keep fit and circuit training classes.

Clientele: No under-17s, but otherwise broad age range of both sexes.

Telephone: 01452 460046

High-street clubs

Baroness Health Club

159-201 Putney High Street, London SW15 1SF

Opened July 1996.

Fees: One-off joining fee of £50, then £38 a month, £22.50 for six months, £380 for 12 months. Includes induction, fitness test and programme and periodic reassessment.

Facilities: 12,000sqft gym with more than 150 pieces of equipment, 25m indoor pool, 20m outdoor pool, Jacuzzi, steam room, sauna and beauty centre. Fitness and dance classes available.

Clientele: Broad age range, including families and children.

Telephone: 01222 460046

Western Baths Club

Cramond Street, Glasgow

Founded in 1876 and the second oldest swimming club in the world still in their own premises. Housed in listed building.

Fees: £1.10 a month, plus £300 a year. There is an 18-month waiting list.

Facilities: Unusual length 30-yard indoor pool in magnificent hall; Turkish and Russian baths, sauna, sports hall with space for badminton and football, gym, exercise and dance classes.

Clientele: Despite long waiting list, does not consist of an exclusive club and has members from all sections of society.

Telephone: 0141-399 1127

JUST THE TICKET: a weekly guide to what's on where for the spectator

PICK OF THE WEEK

FRIDAY/Athletics

Securicor National Sports Centre

One of the final Grand Prix events before Atlanta comes to London offering members of Britain's Olympic squad the chance to improve recent form and test healing injuries.

Linford Christie runs in the 100m and will be looking to close ground on his international rivals. A time below 10.04 seconds will confirm improving form as he aims to peak physically in Atlanta. While Britain's athletes entertain other top competitions from around the globe, the highlight of the evening could well be the men's 400m. Roger Black, reaching the best form of his career, leads a talented British field including Dr Wayne Leftoe, West Thomas and the American Derek Smith.

How to get there: Silverstone Circuit, Towcester, Northamptonshire NN12 8NN. On the A41, from the North or A423 from the South. From A40, take the A34 and A421. From the A41, take the A43 or A508. For further information call 01227 821222. From 01227 821222, press 4 for 2pm start on Saturday, 5 for 7pm start on Sunday.

Price: £10. Silver Ring £5 (01227 821250); Course Enclosure £3 (01227 821250); 2.00; CHESTER Course Enclosure £2.50; Tattersalls £2; Dee Stand £4; 2.10; Tattersalls £2.10.

SALISBURY: Course Enclosure £4; accompanied under-16s free; 2.10; 2.20.

WARRICK: Course Enclosure £2.50; accompanied under-16s free; 2.20.

Southwell: £2; Tattersalls £2.50; QAP members of Chester's Diamond Club £4, accompanied under-16s free; 6.40.

Sunday

MOTOR RACING: British Grand Prix race day £20.

SPORTS: National Off-Road and 4-Wheel Drive Show (10.00am). Blackpool.

ATHLETICS: Heathrow Youth Games (Crystal Palace).

SWIMMING: ASA National Championships (Leeds).

CRICKET: Benson and Hedges Cup Final (Lord's).

ATHLETICS: Heathrow Youth Games (Crystal Palace).

RACING: BURGFIELD: Members £1.10; QAP members £2.50; Grandstand £2.20; YORK: Course Stand £1.80; Silver Ring £2.20; YORK: Course Stand £1.80; Silver Ring £2.20.

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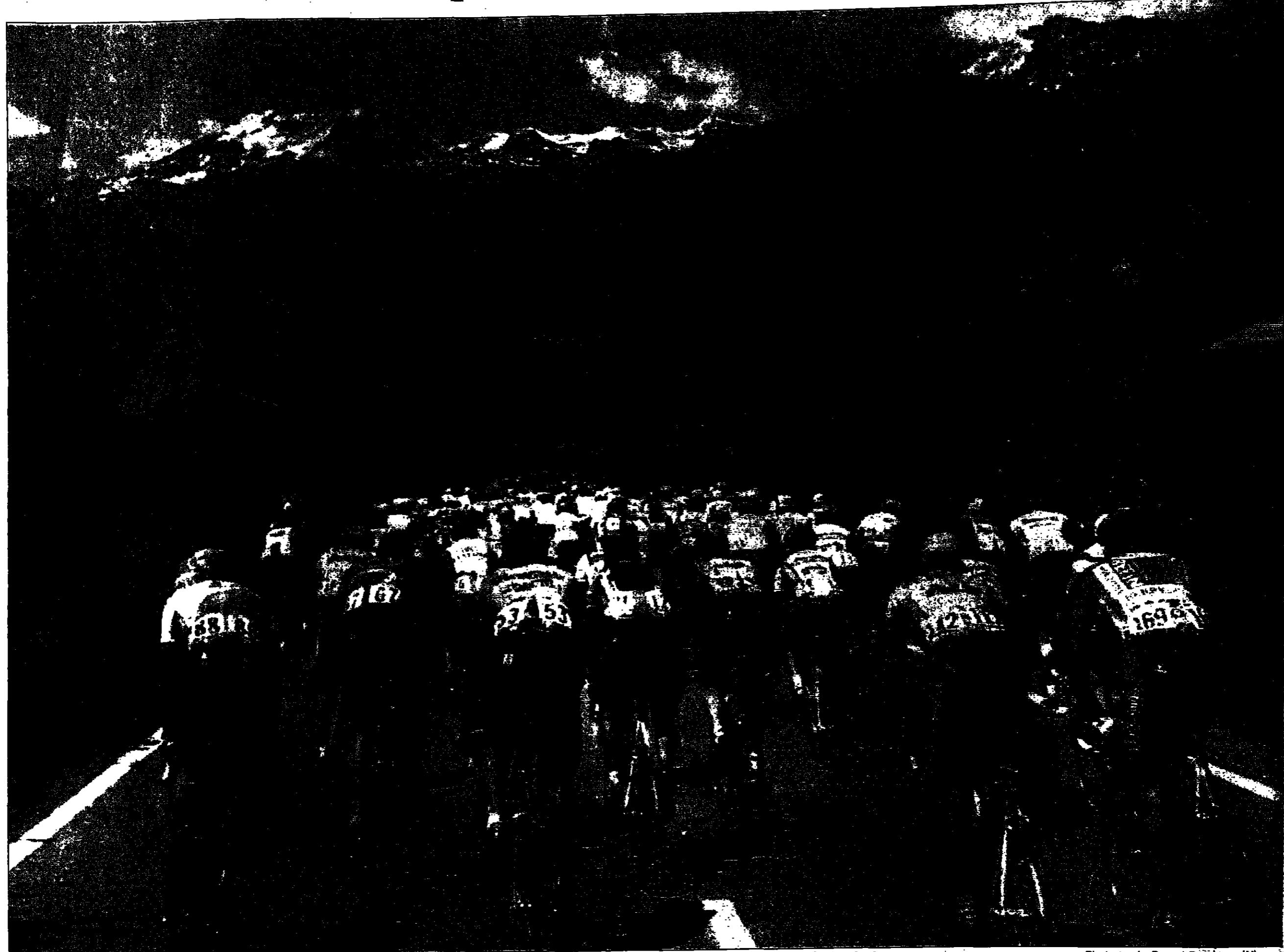
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Telekom conspire to cut off the French



Arrivederci: The Tour de France turns its back on Italy as the peloton heads up the first climb out of Turin en route for the French border and then Gap yesterday

Photograph: Pascal Rondeau/Alsport



Did you guess our hidden personality?

Representing Queen and country, this HGV licence holder and former Army cross-country champion looks poised to bulldoze her way to Olympic glory. So respected is Kelly Holmes's reputation that the Army are now basing their recruitment drive on her success. Her twin dreams as a 14-year-old, to join the Services and to compete in the Olympics, are now nearing fruition.

ROBIN NICHOLL
with the Tour de France

If they were not wearing the Dannebrog, their national flag, the Danes were waving it as Bjarne Riis returned in triumph to France after taking over the yellow jersey on the Italian leg of the Tour de France.

Chanting his name from Turin through to the Gap finish, some wore plastic Viking helmets. All wore big grins, and Rolf Sorensen rated it close to the biggest disappointment of his life as he could not give his countrymen more to chant about.

Five hundred metres from the finish line, the Dane's lone drive for victory came to an end as he was engulfed by a mass of sprinting riders after he had been chased down a mountain road into Gap.

Two years ago Sorensen won a Tour stage at Montpellier to match the previous day's victory by Riis in Albi, but Riis would not have been dismayed by yesterday's outcome. It may not have been a Danish triumph, but his German teammate, Erik Zabel, got his front wheel to the line first, and that success another Tour jersey fell to Riis's Deutsche Telekom squad.

After Riis's win on Monday at Sestriere, his fellow Dane felt it was appropriate to repeat the 1994 act. He fought off a strong challenge from the Italian Bruno Cenghialta, who had him in sight at one point and appeared poised to pounce, but in the finishing straight he could feel the hot breath of the pack on his back. He glanced behind and eased up, and in that final stretch lost 28 seconds as 40 riders swept past, with Zabel leading the charge.

Sorensen's chagrin was nothing to that of the French. Zabel had ousted the Frenchman Frederic Moncassin from the green points jersey that he had held for a week after losing the yellow.

Earlier on the 208km (129 miles) leg, Laurent Jalabert, who had raised French hopes that he was a Tour victor in the making over the past two years,

lowered them with a bump. The world No 1, suffering with gastroenteritis, retired without making it back into France on his bike.

It was 20km from the border that a fatigued Jalabert stopped riding, but his compatriots were far from finished. Jacky Durand had tried and failed to make a clean break after gaining nearly four minutes on the main field.

Then Laurent Madouas forged ahead, and from a counter-attack the Latvian Piotr Ugrumov, Jan Ullrich, another Telekom find, and Richard Virenque joined him for a ride through the kind of countryside that inspires the production of picture postcards.

Yesterday: Stage 10

Turin to Gap
Tuesday 9 July, 128 miles

than 180 years ago. He is said to have cleared a blocked chimney by firing his pistol up the flue. He then appeared at the window, somewhat sooty, to reassure the crowd.

Now only Virenque can play Napoleon to the demands of the French fans. Apart from his mountaineering ability, he is also seven overall, and the only Frenchman in sight of the

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Today is the riders' official rest day but yesterday six of them, including Jalabert, decided it was time they took a longer rest. Among them was the Belgian champion Johny Bruyneel, who has an Achilles tendon injury, and given that he suffered the alarming experience of plunging from a mountain pass three days ago, he is fortunate that is all that is damaged.

The race resumes tomorrow with a 202km (126 miles) leg from Gap to Valence with a series of small mountains that could do as much damage as one major Alpine peak.

Chris Boardman is now at the point where he was in 1994 when he completed 11 days in his first Tour. With Moncassin's jersey challenge weakened, he could have the freedom to try for a stage win.

Greater matters occupy Miguel Indurain. The Spaniard is still 4min 38sec away from that sixth year in the yellow jersey, and Riis, with a lead of 40sec over the Russian Yevgeny Berzin, looks ready to take on all comers.

TOUR DE FRANCE 10th stage (2208m, 129 miles), Turin, It., to Gap, Fri: 1. E Zabel (Ger) 2. B Ullrich (Ger) 3. P Ugrumov (Uzbk) 4. S Fortezzo (It) 5. R Sorensen (Den) 6. F Bakalo (It) 7. M Techmer; 8. E Magen (Fr) 9. F Virenque (Fr) 10. A Berzin (Uzbk) 11. J Durand (Fr) 12. R Madouas (Fr) 13. J Jalabert (Fr) 14. R Durand (Fr) 15. M Fernandez (Gres) 16. M Bougad (Neth) 17. B Riis (Den) 18. M Boonen (Bel) 19. F Cenghialta (It) 20. G Fortezzo (It) 21. Y Berzin (Uzbk) 22. M Schmitz (Monaco) 7-10

Overall standings: 1. Rui Costa (Port) 59min 03sec; 2. Bjarne Riis (Den) 59:06; 3. R Sorensen (Den) 59:08; 4. P Ugrumov (Uzbk) (Ger) 59:10; 5. E Zabel (Ger) 59:12; 6. F Virenque (Fr) 59:13; 7. M Techmer (Fr) 59:14; 8. E Magen (Fr) 59:15; 9. F Cenghialta (It) 59:16; 10. Dufaux (Swi) 59:17; 11. A Berzin (Uzbk) 59:18; 12. R Madouas (Fr) 59:19; 13. J Durand (Fr) 59:20; 14. R Durand (Fr) 59:21; 15. M Fernandez (Gres) 59:22; 16. M Bougad (Neth) 59:23; 17. B Riis (Den) 59:24; 18. M Boonen (Bel) 59:25; 19. G Fortezzo (It) 59:26; 20. Y Berzin (Uzbk) 59:27; 21. M Schmitz (Monaco) 59:28

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